

MISSION AND THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MINISTRY
OF THE KOREAN CHURCH

A Professional Project
Presented to
the Faculty of the
School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
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May 1992

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ABSTRACT

Mission and the Twenty-first Century Ministry of the Korean Church

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The Korean protestant church seems to have been in a crisis since the middle 1980s; not only because the Korean Christians do not like to attend the official services of the church any more, but also because there began to appear a serious decrease in membership. Economically they can afford to enjoy their weekends, philosophically they are mature enough not to feel afraid of the dogmatized God of their parents, and theologically they do not think the church is the only body of Christ and do not respect it as such any more.

What made the Korean church growth stop? Unfortunately, there hardly can be found any attempt to answer this question. The purpose of this project is to attempt to think out an answer to this question from the missional point of view.

Mission is one of the major points of the Bible. The Old Testament prepares the mission of the Gospels with the concept of universalism, and the Acts applies the mission principle of the Gospels to the real situation. According to this biblical concept, mission is to evangelize all the nations and to teach them to take part in the liberation or humanization of this world. With this concept of mission, the debate between the evangelicals and the liberals can be closed.

This concept of mission is based on the Great Commission

of Jesus Christ. Jesus ordered his followers to disciplize all the nations through going, baptizing, and teaching. According to Jesus, in order to achieve the biblical mission, Christians must accept the concepts of the liberals as well as the evangelicals.

Korean church history tells of the great passion for evangelism of the Korean church but, at the same time, the Korean church has tried to change and save Korean society in every epoch. In consideration of this Korean church tradition, the present problem of stagnated growth is a natural result. The Korean church should recover its original feature, full of the passion for evangelism and full of desire to serve the secular world.

Why has Korean church growth stopped? This writer's answer is that the Korean church has gone from biblical teachings to theological ideas. Therefore, if the church returns to the word of God and a synthetic understanding of mission, there will be hope.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Traditional theology has been focusing its concern only upon Christology and soteriology. It was after the 1960s when in the protestant church, the ecumenical movement started and in the Roman Catholic church the Vatican II Council was held, that theology began to direct its attention to the issue of the church or ecclesiology. One of the most important themes of ecclesiology is the issue of mission or missiology. In the nineteenth century, the Christian church only handled the question of how to perform the missionary work, because mission meant cross-cultural evangelism without any questions. But in the next century, the question began to be asked about the mission of the Christian church. Mission does not mean merely foreign evangelism for modern Christians. Modern Christians mean many things when they use the word, mission.

What is the mission of the Christian church? The major part of this project will be the answer to this question. The second chapter surveys what the ecumenical movement means by mission, and what the evangelical's answer to this plain question is. This will be a theological and historical study. The ecumenical movement regards the mission of the church as social responsibility and participation for the liberation of people who are created in God's image. The evangelical point of view looks upon mission as applying every effort to earn souls, both in foreign countries and in one's own home

country. The ecumenical movement continues to function from its point of view, while the evangelicals have been influenced by the ecumenical movement, and have added ecumenical points of view to their understanding of mission.

What is the mission of the Christian church? The third chapter continues to examine the answer to this question from the biblical point of view. It surveys the biblical understanding of mission. This biblical understanding will form my own answer to this question. The theological understandings of mission, of both the ecumenical movement and the evangelicals, will be analyzed and criticized from this biblical point of view.

The fourth chapter studies the situation of the Korean church. It deals with Korean church history from the missional point of view, the present problems, and the vision of the Korean church ministry in the twenty-first century.

The problem addressed in this project is why Korean church growth has stopped since the middle 1980s and how this phenomenon can be cured. Can the Korean church continue to grow? What is the vision of the Korean church for the twenty-first century? The Korean church had been famous, for its rapid growth in number, for a few decades. Approximately 25 percent of the South Korean population is composed of protestant Christians, and the annual average rate of growth since 1900 has been around 14 percent. But since the middle 1980s, the statistics show that there has been no further

increase in membership. This may be considered a crisis, because I think that any biblically sane church should keep on producing the spiritual fruits of gaining souls. There may be various reasons for this phenomenon. One of the most important factors, in my opinion, is the lack of biblical understanding of mission. The Korean church should recover what the Bible tells us about the mission of all Christians.

My thesis is that the mission, which is based on the Bible, should be the goal of the Korean church ministry for its survival and continuous growth through the next century. The concept of mission should be taken out of the Bible, not from the theologians' idea, because the Bible should be the alpha and omega of the Christian faith. I will use the argumentative style in Chapter 2, comparing the ecumenical understanding of mission with that of the evangelical group, and the dialectics in finding the ideal understanding of mission that includes both of them.

In this project the Korean church means the protestant church in South Korea. There are churches in North Korea too, but there is no information about them at all. The term evangelical, or the evangelicals, is a very delicate one to exactly define. Usually in Korea, this word means the trend of those who believe the historicity and scientificity of the Bible in a literal manner. The word has a little different meaning in American usage.

There are only two different groups in the Korean church

from the theological point of view: the conservative or evangelical group and the liberal group. There are no denominational differences in the Korean church from the theological point of view. In Methodist churches, some may be conservative, while others may be liberal. In Presbyterian churches, the situation is the same. The division of these two groups was started in the 1930s, when the higher criticism of the Bible was first introduced to the Korean church. Those who accepted it were called the liberals. Those who denied it called themselves the conservatives, because the traditional Korean church believed in the infallibility of the Bible. Therefore, the Korean conservatives or evangelicals may be identical with the Western fundamentals. The name liberals may not seem fair to the liberals, but I will use the term that the conservatives began to use, only because more than half of the whole Korean church is accustomed to it.

Exactly speaking, there is another group in addition to the conservative and liberal groups. It is not a theological group, but a typological group. It is the so-called pentecostal group. As the Korean conservative is quite different from the American conservative, the Korean pentecostal is also quite different from the American pentecostal. This group has its own history, and shares the Calvinian theology with the Presbyterian church, though in the late 1950s the American pentecostal missionaries economically helped them to form an official independent denomination. The

rapid Korean church growth, in the two decades of the 1960s and the 1970s, was greatly influenced by this Korean pentecostal movement. Since the Korean pentecostal movement appeared, the term conservative has two different meanings: a theological meaning and a typological meaning. From the theological point of view, the conservatives are those who believe in the infallibility of the Bible; yet from the typological point of view, the conservatives are those who do not follow the ministerial style of the Korean pentecostals. Therefore, there are approximately three different groups in Korean church: conservative-conservative, conservative-pentecostal, and liberal.

CHAPTER 2

A Brief Historical Survey of the Theology of Mission

The history of Christian mission theology seems to be as old as the Christian Church itself; for, in a sense, the history of the Christian Church is the very history of its mission. This also can be supported from the traditional ecclesiastical point of view, for God has been building and sustaining the body of Christ for God's mission. According to the Acts of the Apostles, the Christian Church began with mission.¹ Mission was the substance of the church, and the church was the agent of God's mission.

It is very important to study the history of mission theology for two reasons. One reason is that knowledge of the past can give us a better understanding of the present situation. The other reason is that, with knowledge of the past, we can prepare for the future more effectively.² For this second reason, the Israelites were required to remember what God had done for them in the past, whenever they were faced with great adversities. Being reminded of the great exodus and forty years of wandering in the wilderness gave the Israelites not only happy memories, but also hope, courage, and the wisdom to overcome present difficulties while

¹ Acts 2:37-47.

² David J. Bosch, Witness to the World, trans. J. Chun (Seoul: Duranno Seoyun, 1985), 110-11.

preparing for an unknown future.³

The Early Church

It is a very delicate matter to ask whether the Early Church Christians had any kind of theology. Exactly speaking, they did not have any theology at all. Therefore, the question of whether the Early Church had any kind of mission theology had better be reframed by asking whether the Early Church had any recognition of its reason for being Jesus' community. In order to answer this question, Bosch explains three phases of the Early Church.

In the first stage, the Early Church Christians did not seem to have any mission theology or any recognition of their being the body of Christ. Instead, they were filled too completely with the expectation of the impending parousia in their daily lives to have any sense of mission or action toward the world that surrounded them. All they had was a strong desire to be the witness of the Christ Event. From the modern evangelical point of view, this trend can be understood as their mission theology. However, it does not seem fair to say that the Early Church Christians had a mission theology because of their being Jesus' witnesses; for, their being such just came out of their great joy of being God's people through Jesus Christ, not out of their dedication or devotion. They paid all of their attention to Christology, which was derived

³ H. R. Niebuhr, The Kingdom of God in America (New York: Harper, 1959), 1.

from a strong expectation of the impending parousia, rather than ecclesiology.⁴

But, because of the delay of Jesus' second coming, this trend did not last a long time. It was the delay of the second coming of Jesus Christ that brought a recognition of the importance of mission. The Early Church Christians were forced to convert their concern to ecclesiology from Christology or eschatology, and to recognize the considerable gap between the Kingdom of God and the real world to which they belonged too firmly to deny its importance. This gap is the very field of mission activities of the Christian Church. This can be understood as a kind of conflict between a sectarian movement and a process of organization. A new movement of Christianity began to form itself as a religious existence--the Christian Church.

For the Christians of the second stage, who came to see the gap between these two contrasting worlds, mission became an important part of their church life. Though they gave up the impending view of the parousia, they still firmly held the expectation of Jesus' second coming. Recognition of the meaning of mission replaced the sense of the impending parousia. It gave them a bridge which connected their present life to that in the ideal kingdom of God in the future.⁵

⁴ Bosch, 120.

⁵ Ibid., 121.

Mission was another answer to the question of why this delay happened. From their understanding, God delayed Jesus' second coming for the completion of the mission work of the Christian Church.⁶ For them, mission was a way to participate in God's eschaton. They looked upon the kingdom of God as the conclusion of this secular world.

In a third stage, the Early Church Christians began to distinguish this world, from the heavenly kingdom of God, as a completely independent one which had no relationship with the heavenly Kingdom. As a result, the mission of the church was replaced by moral virtues. They believed that good deeds would guarantee a happy life after a physical death in the kingdom of God that was believed to exist, together with the secular world, at a higher level. While the Christians tried to save and change this world in the second stage, in the third stage they tried to be saved from this world. This attitude resulted in the neglect of this sinful and condemned world, while developing a spiritual reinterpretation of eschatology.⁷

This placed the destiny of the Christian Church in great peril. Without the timely persecution by the Roman Empire,⁸ the Christian Church--in which the passion for mission was

⁶ See Matt. 24:14; and Mark 13:10.

⁷ Bosch, 122.

⁸ Stephen Neill, A History of Christian Mission, trans. C. Hong (Seoul: Sungkwang Literature, 1979), 25.

replaced by moralism--would not have been able to inherit the proper biblical tradition of mission. The great adversities reminded them of their true identity as pilgrims in this world, and of their job given by God, the job of participating in God's eschaton.⁹ The mission theology of the Early Church was to be a witness of the Christ Event, through which the church wanted to change this world and believed it could be saved. The church's view was a very well balanced one in comparison with present mission theologies. The ecumenical one is too left-sided, and the evangelical is too right-sided.

After the Milan Edict (AD 313)

The Milan Edict of Constantine was a turning point in the history of Christianity. Before this edict, it was very dangerous for a person to convert to Christianity; but after this edict, it was common to be a Christian.¹⁰ Christian popularity multiplied four times in that one year.¹¹ It was really a crucial turning point. However, this blessing proved to be a great challenge to genuine Christianity. It gave the church the chance to penetrate into the world with great freedom; but at the same time, it gave the church the temptation to give up the identity of the pilgrim.¹² This was identical with the third stage of the Early Church. As

⁹ See Bosch.

¹⁰ Ibid., 127.

¹¹ Neill, 53.

¹² Bosch, 128.

mentioned above, that third stage was corrected by persecution, and with the end of that persecution by the Milan Edict, the church returned to the former stage. The Christian movement was reduced to an organization, and the reality of the kingdom of God was denied, and was again reinterpreted spiritually.¹³ The Early Church lost its contents, and there remained only the forms. As a result, it lost the sense of history or the sense of responsibility in the face of history. It lost the power to proclaim the gospel to the world, and lost the passion to be a witness to the Christ Event.¹⁴

Once the church was reduced to a mere organization, it began to dogmatize its belief. Concern of the Early Church shifted from Christology to ecclesiology, and they began to meditate on God and God's attributes, rather than having a vivid experience with the living God. The concern of the former generation about the present and the future disappeared. It was replaced by dogmas, and the early church's concern was focused upon the past. There followed a change in their understanding of mission. Mission was no more the character of the whole church, nor the substance of the Christian Church. It was reduced to one of the jobs that some members of church were assigned to do. Moreover, it was not the enlargement of the kingdom of God. Rather it was regarded

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Jung-woon Suh, "Mission Theology," lecture delivered at the Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Seoul, Spring 1988.

as the effort for the geographical extension of the organized church.

The first mention of the importance of the proclamation of the gospel to the non-Christians was found in the Second Clement Letter.¹⁵ This implies a great theological change, because it presupposes the universal revelation of God in God's creation. By this time, the simple eschatology of "not yet" was replaced by the realized eschatology of "already here." The concept of "to change" was replaced by that of "to recover," because they began to think Jesus came to his own country among his own people.¹⁶ The core of Christian mission was the proclamation of the gospel to the non-Christians who did not yet recognize the Lord as their own.¹⁷ The incarnation was the key point of Eusebius of Caesarea (260 - 339). His church history was made up of two parts: preparation of the gospel and the description of gospel. He thought that history before Jesus Christ, which had only temporary meaning, could have ultimate meaning only when it was interpreted and organized in the light of the Christ Event. The core of his understanding was the incarnation. Incarnation was the most important issue for Anselm and Athanasius, too. For them, the sole answer to limited and

¹⁵ Horst Burklee, Missionstheologie, trans. J. Lee (Seoul: Concordia Press, 1988), 60.

¹⁶ See John 1:10-11.

¹⁷ Burklee, 62.

desperate human existence was incarnation. Such a trend was culminated in Augustine. In his book, Divine City, he understood church as a part of the divine city. To him, performing the mission of the church meant being the outpost troops of the divine city against this secular world.¹⁸

His understanding was inherited by various orders such as the Dominicans and the Franciscans. It was in 1453 that Nikolaus von Cues wrote his famous article, "Peace of Faith." This was the first article which dealt with the issue of dialogue between religions. His main point was the eschatological mission. According to him, when the eschatological time was fulfilled, all the troubles and problems would stop and the ultimate peace would prevail in Christ.¹⁹ His dialogue was not based upon pluralism, but the absolute superiority of Christianity over other religions. In his work, we can find the recovery of concern about the future, which was neglected just after Constantine's revolution. This was the result of the reaction to the organization of the Christian Church, and its spiritual corruption, by those who regarded themselves as the true church of God.²⁰

It was the Franciscan Order that began to use the term

¹⁸ Ibid., 64.

¹⁹ Ibid., 65-66.

²⁰ Bosch, 136.

missio. This had the same meaning as the word apostle. A "missionary" was a person who was sent by God to the world to serve it. This was made in order to distinguish those laymen who devoted their whole life to Jesus Christ from the priest group.²¹ This term, missionary, was adapted by the Roman Catholic Church to name the workers who did the mission of the Catholic Church, not that of God. The missionaries, from the Franciscan point of view, were sent for the world, but the later missionaries were sent for the church. In the Middle Ages, there was the expansion of only the Christian culture, not the Christian kingdom of God. Here, we can see the root of the present conflict between the ecumenical group and the evangelical group.

After the Reformation

The Reformation, for the protestants, is as important as the Milan Edict. It may be understood as a movement to get the church back to the Early Church before Constantine's revolution or the Milan Edict.²² This movement placed an emphasis upon the present. According to the reformers, being justified is an experience that happens here and now, and the rule of Jesus Christ is absolutely present.²³ Though this reformation had great importance, it did not make any

²¹ Guen-yun Park, "Mission Theology after the 1960s," Modern Religion, November 1982, 47.

²² See Suh.

²³ Niebuhr, 26.

contribution to mission theology.²⁴

For this, we can give at least three explanations: theological, political, and geographical. Theologically they had no room for mission. As for Martin Luther, his soteriology was so predestinational, and his understanding of eschatology was so fatalistic, that he seemed to neglect the issue of mission intentionally.²⁵ Politically, the reformers had no room for mission, because they had to wage a war against the Catholic church until 1648.²⁶ Geographically they had no way to preach the gospel, because they were surrounded by the Catholic nations.

In contrast to this Reformation group, there were two important movements focusing on mission in the Catholic church and in the protestant church, respectively. Ignatius Loyola was the founder of the Catholic movement. He created the Society of Jesus which was anti-Reformation. His colleague, Basque Francis Xavier, was one of the greatest missionaries in church history.²⁷ The protestant movement was started by the Anabaptists led by such leaders as Thomas Muntzer and Jan Mattys. The passion for mission of our present protestant churches may have originated from the Anabaptists' tradition. According to Anabaptists, the most

²⁴ Burkle, 66.

²⁵ Ibid., 68.

²⁶ Neill, 289.

²⁷ Ibid., 188.

important duty of all Christians is to obey Jesus Christ and to follow the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15). They believed that true Christians should be pilgrims and martyrs, and that the true church should be mission-centered.²⁸

There followed the Pietism of the late seventeenth century in Germany, the Evangelical Awakening in the mid-eighteenth century in England, and the Great Awakening in the mid-eighteenth century in America. It was in 1792 that the Baptist Missionary Society was founded by William Carey (1761 - 1834). This was followed by the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Mission in 1886.²⁹ All these movements brought in "the Great Century,"³⁰ and they began to spread the gospel all over the world. In spite of all their contributions, these movements made a serious mistake, because for them mission was no more than foreign evangelization. This was a continuation of the Catholic concept of mission in the Middle Ages. The movements lost the point of changing this world. The mission theology of the eighteenth and nineteenth century was vertical rather than horizontal.

²⁸ Bosch, 155-57.

²⁹ Ibid., 178.

³⁰ K. S. Latourette called this period (1815-1914) the Great Century. See A History of Christianity (New York: Harper, 1975), 163.

Modern Mission Theology

The History and Theology of the Ecumenical Movement

World Missionary Conference. The explosion of the nineteenth century protestant church was started by William Carey, who is called the Father of Modern Mission.³¹ After his mission to India, there appeared an abundance of missional organizations in European countries and in the youngest country, the United States of America.³² They all needed cooperation among themselves for more effective missionary work. This was the beginning of the ecumenical movement.

It was in 1854 that the first World Missionary Conference

³¹ J. Herbert Kane, Understanding Christian Mission (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 146.

³² See also William Hogg, Ecumenical Foundations : A History of the International Missionary Council and Its Nineteenth-century Background (New York: Harper, 1952), 15. Hogg gives a list of those organizations that were founded in the nineteenth century as follows :

- Sunday School Union (England, 1803)
- British and Foreign Bible Society (1804)
- Congregational Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (America, 1810)
- American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (1812)
- Basel Mission (1815)
- American Bible Society (1816)
- Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (England, 1817-1818)
- Methodist Episcopal Missionary Society (America, 1819)
- Danish Missionary Society (Denmark, 1821)
- American Sunday School Union (1824)
- Berlin Mission (1824)
- American Tract Society (1825)
- Rhenish Missionary Association (German, 1828)
- Swedish Missionary Society (1835)
- Board of Foreign Missions of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (America, 1837)
- Y.M.C.A. (England, 1844)
- Norwegian Missionary Society (1845)
- Y.M.C.A. (America, 1851).

was held in New York. A Scotch missionary, Alexander Duff, was the main speaker of that meeting.³³ The second conference was held in Liverpool, England, six years later, and 126 leaders including 37 missionaries attended. The third conference was held in London, and 1,576 leaders from 140 organizations attended. It was in this third meeting that they insisted that the ecumenical movement of Christian churches should be done not only inwardly or spiritually, but also externally or administratively.³⁴ The next meeting was held in New York again, in the first year of the twentieth century (1900). It was 1910 when the next World Missionary Conference was held in Edinburgh. This Edinburgh Conference was the close or conclusion of the missionary and ecumenical movement in the nineteenth century and, at the same time, was the first page of the new missionary movement of the twentieth century.³⁵

The first four conferences were very evangelical. All the participants had one opinion on the absoluteness of God, the redemptive character of Jesus Christ, the priority of evangelism, and the superiority of Christianity to other

³³ Arthur Johnston, The Battle for World Evangelism (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1978), 23.

³⁴ Myung-hyuk Kim, "The Background of the Ecumenical Movement," Sin-hak-ji-nam 65, no.2 (June 1978): 79.

³⁵ Myung-hyuk Kim, "The Historical Changes in the Ecumenical Movement," Sin-hak-ji-nam 66, no. 1 (April 1979): 104.

religions.³⁶ However, the Edinburgh Conference began to take on a little different color. From this conference, the leaders began to move from the traditional evangelical view of mission to a more open view including service for the world. They put such great emphasis upon the oneness of the churches that they declared to give up faith in the infallibility of the Bible; for, that faith was the main cause of the disunion of contemporary churches³⁷. This radical change in theological position worked as the basis of the theology of the later WCC.³⁸ This turning point conference resulted in three fruits: the Faith and Order Movement (1920), the Life and Work Movement (1920),³⁹ and the International Missionary Council (1921).

International Missionary Council. Eleven years later, after the Edinburgh Conference, the missionary leaders gathered together at Mohonk Lake in New York State, and agreed to establish the International Missionary Council (1921). This agreement had been carefully prepared by the Continuation Committee, which had been organized at the Edinburgh Conference. The first conference of the International Missionary Council was held in 1928 in Jerusalem. While at

³⁶ Neill, 454.

³⁷ Johnston, 41-42.

³⁸ Norman Goodale, The Ecumenical Movement (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), 8.

³⁹ These two movements were the womb of the World Council of Churches.

the Edinburgh Conference the theme was how to do mission, at the Jerusalem Conference the theme was why missionary work is done. At the Jerusalem Conference, the gospel began to be interpreted socially as well as spiritually, and the participants converted their concern from the proclamation of the gospel to the social responsibilities of Christians. This was a result of the influences of the Social Gospel theologian, Walter Rauschenbusch. The second conference of the International Missionary Council was held in Tambaram Madras, India (1938). This conference was somewhat closer to the traditional evangelical position than the Jerusalem one. The main speaker, Hendrik Kraemer, had some difficulties after his speech; for, he denied any point of contact between Christianity and other world religions. His theology was influenced by the dialectical theology of Karl Barth.⁴⁰ This was the first conference that dealt with the issue of economic equality and division of wealth.⁴¹

The Whitby Conference was held in 1947, in Canada. The important theological issue of this conference was the division of God's revelation and the Bible. This conference tried to find revelation outside the Bible. Total evangelization, which means the whole endeavor of the whole church for the social revolution, was emphasized.

⁴⁰ Ho-jin Chun, Mission and the Korean Church (Seoul: Emmao Publishing, 1985), 95-96.

⁴¹ Evert Jensem Schoonhoven, "Tambaram 1938," International Review of Mission 267 (1978): 313.

Theologically, this was influenced by the theology of the realized eschatology of Charles H. Dodd, and by John Baillie who divided kerygma, didache and koinonia.⁴² The next conference was the Willingen Conference (1952). This conference produced the famous term, *Missio Dei*.⁴³ The Christian Church was no more the subject of mission; it was the trinitarian God who did the job of mission.⁴⁴ While the Whitby Conference tried to find revelation outside the Bible, the Willingen Conference tried to find God's work outside the church. Oscar Cullmann, Paul Tillich, and Johannes C. Hoekendijk influenced this conference.⁴⁵ The Gahna Conference (1958) was the last held by the International Missionary Council. At this conference, they decided to unite with the WCC, which was formed in 1948. This decision resulted in the union of mission (IMC) and church (WCC). As the result of this decision, the IMC was absorbed into the WCC in the New Delhi Conference (1967), which was the Third General Assembly of the WCC.

World Council of Churches. The Edinburgh Conference (1910) produced three fruits. One of them was the International Missionary Council, and the others were the

⁴² Ho-jin Chun, Mission and the Korean Church, 97-98.

⁴³ Harold E. Fey, ed. A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1948-1968, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 178-79.

⁴⁴ Bosch, 212.

⁴⁵ Chun, Mission and the Korean Church, 98-99.

Faith and Order Movement and the Life and Work Movement, both of which were organized in 1920. After they had two conferences, which were held in 1927 and 1937 respectively, these two organizations gathered together in 1938, and decided to unite. In 1948, these two organizations had the first united general assembly in Amsterdam. This was the first general meeting of the WCC.⁴⁶

After the Second General Assembly of the WCC (1954) in Evanston, the International Missionary Council decided to unite the WCC at the Gahna Conference (1958). The IMC joined the WCC from the Third General Assembly (1961) in New Delhi, and was reduced to one of the three commissions of the WCC (Commission on World Mission and Evangelism). The New Delhi assembly had two important fruits: the concept of dialogue and the acceptance of liberation theology. This dialogue introduced the concept of the cosmic Christ. John 3:16 and Acts 14:17 were cited, but Acts 4:12 was neglected completely. At the same time, radical participation in the social revolution was approved under the influence of the liberation theology of Latin America.⁴⁷

The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism held its first conference in 1963 in Mexico. As the theme "Mission in Six Continents" implies, they came to the conclusion that all nations and all countries all over the world are equally the

⁴⁶ Ibid., 91.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 100-01.

subjects of mission.⁴⁸

Five years after the Mexico Conference, the Fourth General Assembly of the WCC was held in Upsala. It was this assembly that defined mission as humanization. Since this Assembly, the mission theology of the ecumenical movement clearly had a new direction; for, before Upsala, mission was understood as the combination of witness and service. But after Upsala, mission lost one of its two arms. In the Upsala assembly, they tried to discern traditional mission and *Missio Dei*. According to them, real mission or *Missio Dei* means to participate in the activities of God which happens in this world. Since this assembly, mission has begun to be understood as humanization.⁴⁹ As a result, this broadened the concept of dialogue at the New Delhi Assembly.⁵⁰

The second conference of CWME was held in 1972-1973 in Bangkok. They defined salvation from the socio-political and economical points of view, only to identify salvation with liberation. This kind of salvation was supported in the Fifth General Assembly of the WCC in Nairobi (1975), where Jesus was described as the political liberator. Many theologians agreed that the Christian Church should be involved in social

⁴⁸ Charles W. Ranson, "Mexico City 1963," International Review of Mission 210 (1964): 145.

⁴⁹ The Frankfurt Declaration (1970) was the reaction of the evangelical theologians to this conclusion. See Peter Weierhaus, "The Background of the Frankfurt Declaration," Modern Thought 14 (January 1979): 68-78.

⁵⁰ Chun, Mission and the Korean Church, 101-03.

revolution in any way, but at the same time they did not forget to point out the danger of such a one-sided understanding of salvation and mission.⁵¹ Mortimer Arias suggested that they discern evangelism from mission, and blamed the WCC for losing the more important factor, evangelism.⁵²

The third conference of the CWME was held in 1980 in Australia. They gathered with the slogan, "Thy kingdom come." According to them, the kingdom of God brings liberation, perfection, respect and life to those who are hungry for justice and struggling with greed, selfishness and death. The Sixth General Assembly of the WCC was held in 1983, in Vancouver. They dealt with the issue of shalom or peace. According to this general assembly, mission entails all kinds of effort toward peace. Though there was a serious discussion on the dialogue with other religions and evangelism, the final report did not mention the spiritual need of evangelism at all.⁵³

The Seventh General Assembly was held in Canberra, Australia, from February 7, 1991 to February 20, 1991. The report starts with regretting their unanswered hope for peace

⁵¹ Ibid., 107.

⁵² Bosch, 227-28.

⁵³ Peter Weierhaus, "The Trend of Present Mission Theology and the Direction of Evangelical Theology," Bible and Theology 2 (December 1984): 253-54.

which was the theme of the Vancouver Assembly.⁵⁴ The focus of this meeting was the Holy Spirit as the creator (Nos. 20, 21⁵⁵) the changer (Nos. 2, 57) and the liberator (No. 36). The issue of environment or ecological concern (No. 35) was dealt with carefully. The goal of mission is the recovery and renewal of God's creatures (No. 67). This assembly dealt with socially problematic issues, such as racism and sexism (Nos. 44-47, 53-55). While the preceding meetings were restricted to political and economical liberation, this one enlarged its category to include social liberation--in other words, cultural liberation (No. 70).

The mission theology of the Ecumenical Movement. Mission has a very vast area of definition. For some, it is related to evangelism or earning souls through the atoning grace of Jesus Christ in a foreign country. At the same time it is related, for others, to the social responsibilities of Christians or humanization. For those in the Early Church, mission meant simply their daily life. However, after the Milan Edict, it meant just the expansion of the territory of church power. This trend came to the protestant Christians in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. The only difference is

⁵⁴ During this meeting, the U.S.A. and Iraq were waging the Gulf War.

⁵⁵ These are the item numbers of the Report of the Seventh General Assembly of WCC in Canberra. See Christian Center for Asian Studies, Report of Canberra 1991, unpublished, March 1991. On March 16, 1991 there was a seminar reporting on the Canberra Assembly, held by the Christian Center for Asian Studies. The report was translated into Korean by the Center.

that while the Catholic church of the Middle Ages regarded mission as very political, the protestants of the modern times thought it more spiritual. For protestantism, mission was foreign evangelism. This is not what mission originally means. Rather, mission should be understood as the combination of witness and service.⁵⁶ For Early Church Christians, this was true; for, mission was their life. It was a natural result, after the Milan Edict, for Christians to lose the social or realistic factor in their understanding of mission. For a long time Christians were compelled to compromise, first with the Roman Empire, and later with other political powers. They could not say anything about the social structure, political issues, or economical problems.

The Ecumenical Movement group's understanding of mission can be understood as a reaction to that of the preceding people. They began to see the other part of mission which had been hidden for a long time, and stuck to it. That is why the group saw mission as political, economical and sociological liberation, which can be integrated in a word: recovery of true humanity or humanization. The mission theology of the Ecumenical Movement is humanization and political, economical, and social liberation.

Some mistakes can be found in the Ecumenical Movement. First, in the history of the Ecumenical Movement, we can find

⁵⁶ Orlando Costas, The Church and Its Mission: A Shattering Critique from the Third World (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1974), 267.

a process which starts with individual salvation, moves through social concern, and then toward social salvation. This process seems to have lost the essential factor, the doctrine, of the Christian church; for, doctrine is more important than the moral approach. Mission theology lost the ecclesiology, and the distinction between Christian and non-Christian.

Second, the ecumenical movement made a mistake in losing their effectiveness. At first, they worked toward more effective mission, only to prove that they were not right in thinking so. Mission was the master, and ecumenism was the guest. However, now the situation has been completely reversed. Mission is not served by ecumenism; rather, mission serves for ecumenism. Peace may be a wonderful goal of all human beings, but it is possible only when it comes from God.⁵⁷

The Theology of Mission in the Evangelicals

This section discusses the mission theology of the evangelical group and its brief history. The term, evangelical, does not have any technical or theological connotation. It is used only for a convenience to discern this group from the ecumenical group or the WCC. Even in the evangelical group, there have been a series of changes in their understanding of mission, being influenced by the ecumenical group.

⁵⁷ See Luke 2:14; and John 14:27.

Evangelical missionary conventions after 1961.⁵⁸ In the history of mission theology, the Edinburgh Conference is very important; for, as a result of this conference, the WCC and the International Missionary Council were organized. The IMC held six conferences and then joined the WCC. At the last conference of the IMC (Gahna, 1958), the IMC decided to unite with the WCC. However, a lot of evangelical leaders did not obey this decision. Peter Wagner described this union as "the Babylonian captivity of the Christian mission."⁵⁹ What those who did not accept the union denied was not the union itself; rather, their concern was the initiative. The female representative of the Republic of Korea, Hwallan Kim, said that she did not agree with the union in principle, but if it was unavoidable it should be IMC absorbing the WCC.⁶⁰ Therefore, after the union of the IMC and the WCC, this group gathered together apart from the WCC.

For convenience, this discussion connects the mission conventions of the evangelical groups after the New Dehli General Assembly of the WCC (1961), to the mission conferences of the nineteenth century before the Edinburgh Conference (1910); for, they have a similar theological color toward understanding Christian mission.

⁵⁸ At the New Deli General Assembly held in 1961, the International Missionary Council was absorbed into the WCC.

⁵⁹ Chun, Mission and the Korean Church, 99.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 100.

The first meeting of this evangelical group was the Berlin World Evangelism Convention held in Germany in 1966. At first, this meeting was prepared for the anniversary of the tenth birthday of the famous journal, Christianity Today. The theme of this convention was "One Race, One Gospel, One Task." More than 1,200 church leaders from more than 100 countries attended. This convention was completely focused on evangelism and the passion for it. However, there was not any mention about "cross-cultural evangelism."⁶¹

The second convention was held in Singapore in the same year (1968) as the Upsala General Assembly of the WCC. This meeting encouraged passion for evangelism especially for the Asian countries. This was the first international convention where the Asian churches appeared with the leadership from churches of the whole world. Out of seven goals of that convention, two were related to Asia. One was about the Asian culture and the other was about the contemporary problems of Asia. Moreover, almost all the main speakers were leaders of Asian churches.⁶²

The third convention was the Minneapolis Missionary Convention (1969). At this convention, they declared the eschatological hope for Jesus' physical second coming as ground for evangelism. This was the first evangelical

⁶¹ M. L. Nelson, Evangelism for the Third World, trans. D. Yoon (Seoul: Voice Publishing, 1977), 20-21.

⁶² Ibid., 22-24.

missionary convention to mention the social responsibility of Christians.⁶³ This development in the understanding of mission seems to be the result of the influence of the WCC, because this was held just one year after the WCC Upsala General Assembly, which produced the concept of salvation as humanization.

During the same year, there was a missionary convention of Latin American countries in Bogota, Columbia. Approximately 920 leaders from 25 countries attended this convention. Their theme was "Action in Christ for a Continent in Crisis." The background of this convention was the Second Vatican Council which allowed Catholic Christians generosity toward protestant Christians.⁶⁴ They discussed the need for dialogue with the other religions at the individual level, and discussed the need to teach the evangelical tradition more seriously and consistently.⁶⁵

The Amsterdam Missionary Convention (1971) was held by the European Evangelical Alliance. A total of 1,064 representatives from 36 countries attended that meeting. They confirmed the traditional soteriology, salvation only through Jesus Christ, and reminded people of an individual Christian's duty within evangelism. What is important is that they

⁶³ Johnston, 254.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 255.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 262.

included the social concern in the Christian gospel.⁶⁶ This seems to be influenced by the concept of humanization of the Upsala Assembly of the WCC like the Minneapolis Convention.

The Lausanne Missionary Convention was the most important one, for it gave the biggest theological challenge to the evangelical group as well as to the ecumenical group. This convention put emphasis upon the evangelization of the whole world. They confirmed the authority of the bible, and at the same time accepted the open view on evangelism by accepting the necessity of the social responsibilities of Christians. They produced the Lausanne Covenant as the result of their efforts. In comparison with the Berlin Convention, there was a great change in mission theology. At the Lausanne Convention, mission was regarded as liberation and dialogue, while at the Berlin Convention, Christian mission was understood as preaching the gospel, and repentance including social service and education.⁶⁷ According to Lausanne, the responsible services of Christians for the world was a natural result of evangelism, while at Berlin they concluded that evangelism brought growth in membership to the local churches as well as hope for the parousia.⁶⁸ This change or development was made by J. Stott, who was influenced by the

⁶⁶ Ibid., 264.

⁶⁷ Chun, Mission and the Korean Church, 30.

⁶⁸ Ho-jin Chun, Missiology (Seoul: Reformed Church Publishing, 1985), 30.

Missio Dei of the WCC. He explained mission as God's action that appears in the very nature of God. According to him, the living God whom we meet in the Bible is an appointing God, and this appointing is the very mission.⁶⁹

The declarations of the evangelical group. Since the Upsala General Assembly of the WCC, the evangelical theologians, who were not with WCC, began to declare what they believe. The first of these declarations is the Frankfurt Declaration (1970), and it was followed by the Chicago Declaration (1973), the Lausanne Covenant (1974), an Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle (1980), and the Wheaton Declaration (1983). These are essential to understanding the mission theology of the evangelicals.

1. The Frankfurt Declaration. The Frankfurt Declaration was proclaimed in May, 1970. This was aimed as an attack on the new concept of "humanization," produced by the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the WCC at the fourth General Assembly of the WCC in Upsala, which was held in 1968.⁷⁰ However, this was not an attempt to wage a theological discussion at all;⁷¹ rather, it was no more than a warning about the disastrous fruits of the secularized

⁶⁹ John Stott, "The Biblical Basis of Evangelism", in Let the Earth Hear His Voice, ed. J. D. Douglas (Minneapolis: World Wide Publishing, 1975), 66.

⁷⁰ Weierhaus, "Background of the Frankfurt Declaration," 73.

⁷¹ Ibid., 72.

theology of the WCC.⁷² It was the report of the CWME, "Renewal in Mission" prepared by Walter Hollenweger, that caused the evangelical theologians to proclaim this declaration. Though there was a great number of objections to this report, this report was accepted only with a few amendments. According to Weierhaus, though not sufficient, these amendments may be attributed to an English evangelical theologian, John Stott.⁷³

Though evangelical theologians forced Commission members to amend their first draft, it was not so successful. Weierhaus blames narrow-minded Commission members for this failure, because the Commission members did not pay enough attention to those who had different theological positions from theirs; "the request of the evangelical theologians to have a dialogue is denied by those colleague Christians but the dialogue with those who have quite different faith such as Buddhism, Islam, and Marxism is welcomed."⁷⁴ Two years later after this sixth assembly in 1968, a group of German evangelical theologians at a theological convention, discussed the draft which was framed by Weierhaus for confutation to that report. After some amendments they accepted this paper as their official statement. The number of the theologians who at first signed this declaration was

⁷² Ibid., 74.

⁷³ Ibid., 69-70.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 76.

fifteen.

This declaration aimed to confirm the basis, contents and goals of the Christian mission from the biblical point of view, not to discuss the contemporary theological issues such as indigenization. From the systematic theological point of view, this is rooted in Lutheran tradition, which discerned objective redemption on Calvary from the subjective application through grace accepted by faith.⁷⁵ This does not accept higher criticism and demythologization theory; on the contrary, this adheres to the traditional authority of the Bible as well as the consistency and continuity of the Bible.⁷⁶ This declaration criticizes the ecumenical movement for losing respect for the authority of the Bible, secularizing the Bible through sociological interpretation, and weakening eschatology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, and Christology. This document denies the idea of humanization, because they believe humanization, as the WCC defines it, is not a recovery of lost humanity, but humanization of God. Therefore, this view is reduced to blasphemy, or deification of human beings, which was the first tragedy in human history written in the third chapter of Genesis.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ibid., 72.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 73.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

The Frankfurt Declaration⁷⁸ is made up of seven sections that deal with the seven fundamental factors in mission. Every section begins with the quotation of the Bible as the foundation for each section's contents. The first one is about the foundation or basis for mission. They regard the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) as the sole basis for mission.

The second one deals with the goal of mission.⁷⁹ Here, they refute the idea of humanization of the WCC as the goal of mission. Humanization was regarded as one of the results of evangelism or salvation. It is very important for them to point out the necessity of social responsibility as a result or proof of true evangelism.

The third one is about the content of mission.⁸⁰ They declare that our Lord Jesus Christ, who is real God and real human being, is the only basis, the whole content, and the absolute authority of mission. Here, they deny the anonymous Christian theory.

The fourth one deals with the method of mission.⁸¹ They confirm the traditional understandings of church and sacraments. According to them, mission is performed only

⁷⁸ The Korean translation of the declaration can be found in Modern Thought 15 (February 1979): 83-91.

⁷⁹ See Ps. 18:49; Ezek 38:23; and Rom 15:9.

⁸⁰ See Acts 4:12.

⁸¹ See John 3:16; and 2 Cor. 5:20.

through proclaiming the Gospel, and accomplished by accepting the proclaimed Gospel as expressed in sacraments, and witnessed through serving this world. The fifth one is about the visible purpose of mission.⁸² They declare that the first purpose of mission is to build up bodies of Christ in this world, as many as possible. This position is similar to that of D. McGavran. According to him, the aim of mission is to make people become Jesus' disciples through proclaiming Jesus as the only one God and personal savior, and to help them to be responsible members of their local churches.⁸³

The sixth one declares salvation is only through faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.⁸⁴ They regarded dialogue with other religions not as the substitute for proclamation of the Gospel, but as a channel to it.

In the last section, they confirm the traditional faith in eschaton.⁸⁵ They attack the identification of Messianic salvation with evolution, development, and social change, because they believe in the supernatural intervention of God in human history through the parousia as its literal meaning. In this section, they mention the social responsibilities of Christians as the obedience to Jesus' order. Jesus's order is

⁸² See Rom. 12:2; and 2 Peter 2:9.

⁸³ Donald McGavran, "Essential Evangelism," in The Conciliar-Evangelical Debate: The Crucial Documents 1964 - 1976, ed. D. McGavran (Pasadena: William Carey, 1978), 56.

⁸⁴ Eph. 2:11f.

⁸⁵ Matt. 24:14.

to love our neighbors, without forgetting our limits in doing such social services, because of the existing real demonic power in this world where we serve others.

2. Other declarations after the Frankfurt Declaration. The Chicago Declaration was made in November, 1973 by about fifty evangelicals led by Ron Sider. They declared the absolute sovereignty of God, and, at the same time, insisted upon the necessity of social, economical, and political participation of Christians.⁸⁶

The Lausanne Covenant(1974) is regarded as a turning point in the history of evangelical mission theology; for, it deals equally with the social participation of Christians and the importance of evangelization. However, they did not forget to put the priority between them very clearly. They put evangelism in the first place.⁸⁷ They explain the reason why the evangelical churches have been neglecting the social participation. According to them, such a trend began with the repulsion to the social gospel movement. They insist that the social responsibility of Christians is rooted in the correct belief in God, is required by the proper understanding of human beings, is helped by the right understanding of salvation, and is encouraged by the correct understanding of

⁸⁶ Myung-hyuk Kim, "Trend and Theological Theme of Evangelical Mission Theology: Evangelization and Social Participation," in Textbook of Yonsei Pastors' Seminar, vol.6, ed. United Graduate School of Theology (Seoul: Union Publishing, 1986), 390.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 395.

the kingdom of God and proper obedience to the kingship of Jesus Christ.⁸⁸

The Lausanne Covenant was reconfirmed by the Grand Rapids Declaration in 1982, where they put the emphasis upon the partnership of social responsibility and evangelism, keeping the priority of the latter.⁸⁹ They still stuck to the priority of evangelism, because evangelism leads to eternal value, while social responsibility brings only temporary values.⁹⁰ The Grand Rapids Declaration was confirmed by the Wheaton Declaration in 1983.⁹¹

The mission theology of the evangelical group. The ecumenical movement regards mission as the social responsibility or participation of Christians politically and economically, under which lies their understanding of salvation as humanization and liberation. The evangelical group has been surely influenced by this theological position of the ecumenical movement. The evangelicals seem to accept the theology of the WCC at least partially. However, they still stay on the traditional trend so firmly that it seems to be impossible for them to go hand in hand with the WCC. While the ecumenicals think that mission should start with the social participation of Christians, the evangelicals think

⁸⁸ Ibid., 391-92.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 394-95.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 396.

that mission is the proclamation of Gospel and increase in church membership, followed by the social participation of Christians.

What does this difference derive from? The root of all these differences is the different understanding of the Bible, as the Frankfurt Declaration tells this point clearly.⁹² For evangelicals, the starting point of all their theological discussion is the Bible as the absolute and objective revelation of God; on the contrary, ecumenicals accept the Bible as relative and subjective revelation. Unfortunately it seems there is no way to handle this disunion. The only remaining hope for us is the last sentence of the Frankfurt Declaration; "this makes us hope for only the one who promised, 'and now, I make all things new.'"

⁹² Weierhaus, "The Background of the Frankfurt Declaration," 73.

CHAPTER 3

Biblical Understanding of Mission

There have been lots of missionary conferences and conventions since the nineteenth century. Each of them have had their own theme or issue respectively. Gerald Anderson summarized the variety of confusing understandings of mission through putting the various themes of the conferences in a rough stream: "how" was the first theme (Edinburgh, 1910); the second was "why" (Jerusalem, 1928); the next was "from where" (Tambaram, 1938) which was followed by "to where" (Whitby, 1947); and in the long run IMC came to the last question of "what."¹ This seems to be oversimplified, but gives us a clear understanding of the present situation. Mission seems to be familiar to every Christian, but the truth is not so.² We have dealt with this confusion in the previous chapter. That is why we should come back to the Bible, which is the canon, the only and sufficient standard for the Christian faith and the life of Christians. What does the Bible tell and imply about mission?

The Old Testament

The most important question is whether the Old Testament has any passage that mentions or implies mission from the general point of view regarding it as cross-cultural evangelism. Some scholars such as Blauw, Hahn, and Chai say

¹ Bosch, 14.

² Ibid., 58.

no to this question. According to Blauw, the Old Testament has only the idea of universalism, which interprets God as the God of all the nations as well as the Israel people.³ Chai has the same position with Blauw. She says that the Old Testament does not have any missionary character, but only universalism.⁴ This issue of universalism is very important for mission theology. If God were not the universal One, there would not be the necessity of any missionary works. According to Hahn, the Old Testament offers only the crucial foundation for understanding the mission of the New Testament.⁵

Other scholars say yes to this same question. Bengdt Sundkler is the first one of this second group. He divided mission into two parts: centripetal mission and centrifugal mission. According to his division, the Old Testament has the centripetal mission.⁶ It seems better to regard the Old Testament as having no idea of mission from the general point of view, but only universalism. However, the Old Testament,

³ Johannes Blauw, The Missionary Nature of the Church (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), 28.

⁴ Eun-joo Chai, "Mission from the Biblical Point of View", Sin-hak-ji-nam 70, no. 4 (September 1983): 89.

⁵ Ferdinand Hahn, Mission in the New Testament, trans. Frank Clark (London: SCM Press, 1965), 20.

⁶ Bengdt Sundkler, The World of Mission (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), 15-16.

as the preparation of the New Testament,⁷ has some passages that prophesy the mission of the New Testament.⁸

Another important question is which is prevailing in the Old Testament: particularism or universalism. Though at a glance, the former seems to be prevailing all over the Old Testament, it is the latter that prevails;⁹ for, particularism is no more than a channel or way leading to universalism.¹⁰ From this point of view, God's calling of Abraham (Gen. 12), which is generally regarded as the root of particularism of the Old Testament, is rather the preparation of God for recovery and salvation of God's lost children; for, God's election of him was the election for service. Even the clear hatred for the Gentiles was not a simple abhorrence for the people themselves; rather, it was the detestation of their false religion which told a lie about the universal God.¹¹

The Pentateuch

The most important and clear basis of universalism of the Old Testament appears in the Pentateuch. The prehistory part

⁷ H. H. Rowley says that the Old Testament does not perform any missionary works, but it works as the preparation of the Great Commission. See The Missionary Message of the Old Testament (London: Cary Kingsgate Press, 1944), 26.

⁸ One example in the passage is "but I will also make you a light to the nations so that all the world may be saved" (Isa. 49:6). Especially, see the passage in Isa. 66:18-21 that predicts the mission for the Gentiles explicitly.

⁹ Gen. 12:1-3; Exod. 19:6; Ps. 67:2,7; 87:3f.; 86:9, etc.

¹⁰ See Chai, 86, and Blauw, 24.

¹¹ Chai, 88.

(Gen. 1-11) especially has very significant narratives and stories as the basis of mission. This part clearly shows the universal kingship of Yahweh over all the countries and nations in this planet; for, it is Yahweh that created this universe and all living creatures in it. Therefore, it is right for the creation narrative to be regarded as the most important passage for mission. The creation narrative tells us about God, nature and the human beings. Human beings are very unique creature of God because only they are created after God's image, and so they are different from nature.¹² The consistent theme of that narrative is the supreme sovereignty of Yahweh as the creator. This narrative pictures the ultimate goal of mission for God's people. We must recover the original Eden.

The story of Adam's fall (Gen. 3) gives us reason for the necessity of salvation. What we need is not an education or morality, but salvation, because we are in the middle of the results of that fall.¹³ In this story, we can find the most important passage in all the Old Testament. It is the passage of "Protevangelium" (Gen. 3:15). This is the first promise to send the Messiah.

The flood narrative (Gen. 7-9) is the first one that mentions God's covenant with God's people. God, though God

¹² Oswald T. Allis, God Spake by Moses (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1958), 12.

¹³ Ibid., 20.

has the absolute sovereignty over all God's creatures, made the rules that should be kept by God out of God's love for God's creatures. The concept of covenant is very important, especially for traditional soteriology; for, salvation is ready for all mankind, but it is given only through the covenant of faith between God and human beings.

The tower story is the last one in the prehistory part. This narrative not only explains the reason why human beings have various languages in spite of their deriving from the same forefathers, but also shows the clear sovereignty of Yahweh over all the nations. At the same time, this narrative has the archetypal structure of mission, sending toward the world. Mission should be centrifugal. Without centrifugality, mission would not be possible. For this reason, God allowed the Jerusalem church to be persecuted.¹⁴ People tried to avoid "being scattered all over the earth" (Gen. 11:4). That is why they began to build a city with a tower called Babel. This was quite opposite to what God intended (Gen. 1:28;9:1,7).

God's calling of Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3) was the first calling for mission in the Bible. With this calling, the particularism of the Old Testament begins. This is not the conversion from universalism to particularism, but this particularism serves as a way to universalism. He was elected

¹⁴ Acts 8:2. God scattered the Jerusalem Christians to preach the gospel all over the world.

not because he was better than his contemporaries, not because his religion satisfied God, but because God wanted him to serve for all the nations created by God (Gen. 12:3). God wanted to bless all mankind through Abraham. Paul regarded this as the archetype of the gospel (Gal. 3:8).

Exodus is the climax of mission. The goal of exodus was God's being glorified by the chosen people (Rom. 11:36). God's election has dual meaning: salvation of the poor people and their service for God (Titus 2:14).¹⁵ Some passages in the Pentateuch imply and predict the expansion of the gospel among the Gentiles.¹⁶

The Prophets

The former prophets. The books that deal with the Israel history after entering into the Canaan area led by Joshua, are included in prophetic documents from the Israeli traditional point of view. God prohibited the Jews from being blended with the Gentiles, but allowed the Gentiles to be one of the Jews only if they decided to obey God's covenant and accept the faith in Yahweh. In the early prophetic documents, there are many incidents showing this case. Elijah stayed at the house of a Gentile widow in Zarephath during the drought (1 Kings 17:8-24). Elisha cured the disease of the Syrian general, called Naaman. An anonymous little girl, who had

¹⁵ J. Barton Payne, The Theology of the Older Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 188.

¹⁶ See for example Exod. 12:38, 48; Num. 10:29; 32:12.

been captured from Israel (during Naaman's raid against Israel) to be a servant of his wife, introduced the great prophet, Elisha, to this Gentile enemy (2 Kings 5). All these are implying universalism.

The relationship between God and Israel can be well explained with the concept of covenant. The ultimate goal of this covenant is the salvation of all mankind.¹⁷ God revealed Himself as the God who acts.¹⁸ Therefore, being a Gentile or a Jew is not the point. The point is whether he or she agrees to the covenant and accepts the faith in Yahweh. This is clearly shown in the dedicational prayer of King Solomon (1 Kings 8:41-43). He called the Jerusalem temple the temple of all people from all nations in the world.

The later prophets. While the early group of prophetic documents or history books declare God as the God who acts - which means God delivered God's intention through the presence of Israel, the later group of it or the books of the prophets show the God who speaks or promises.¹⁹ We can find a few missionary ideas in these documents. They are very important not only because they are main issues of the Old Testament theology, but also because they prepare for mission of the New Testament.

¹⁷ Chun, Missiology, 44.

¹⁸ See for example Exod. 7:20; Lev. 26:45; Esther 8:17; Ps. 98:2; and Ezek. 5:8.

¹⁹ Chun, Missiology, 47.

The first missionary idea in the books of prophets is that Yahweh is the God of all the nations.²⁰ There is no limitation in God's salvation and judgement. God saves and judges all the nations in the world (Amos 1:3-2:3). Isaiah says that the Jerusalem temple will be called a house of prayer for the people of all nations (Isa. 56:7). This is the very issue of universalism. The book of Jonah is the book that shows the issue of universalism most clearly in the Old Testament. Jonah was the first official missionary sent by God to a foreign country, but he was not so well qualified, because we can hardly find any missionary motive in him at all.

The second missionary idea is the issue of spontaneous returning of the heathen. This is what Sundkler calls the centripetal mission.²¹ This idea is shown mainly in Isaiah (2:2; 55:5; 56:7; 60:3; 62:1-2; cf. Jer. 3:17; Zech. 8:22). The prophets say that the center of this spontaneous centripetal returning is the Jerusalem Temple. This does not mean the geographical Jerusalem Temple any more. It is Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world and His Kingdom. It was Jesus Himself that interpreted the Jerusalem Temple like that. Jesus was the promised center of that spontaneous centripetal

²⁰ See Isa. 2:1-4; 19:25; 25:6-9; 56:7; 60:1-22; 66:19; Hos. 2:23; and Zech. 8:20ff.

²¹ See Sundkler.

returning of the heathen.²² Moreover, this idea is very eschatological. All this will happen in the last days of the human history. The unheard-of rapid church growth of the third world in Asia, Africa and Latin America may be regarded as the accomplishment of this promise.²³ The third one is the issue of the suffering servant. The final salvation will come with the suffering servant. It is still a matter of debate whether this suffering servant is an individual or a group. In my opinion, the suffering servant means both of them. As an individual, it means crucified Lord Jesus Christ, and as a group, it means the whole church as His body. This dual interpretation can give an insight for the conflict between the ecumenical group and the evangelical group. Jesus Christ suffered for the salvation of all the nations, and the followers of Christ proclaim this good news all over the world: evangelism which means perpendicular recovery with God through Jesus Christ. At the same time, the body of Christ, the Christian church suffers for the world that God loved so much that God gave His only son: social responsibility which means horizontal recovery with other people and creatures in the love of God.

The Writings: Psalms

While the missionary theme of the Pentateuch is the

²² Richard R. De Ridder, Discipling the Nations (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), 51.

²³ Chun, Missiology, 50.

sovereignty of God, that of Psalms is the glory of God. The issue of praising the Lord, who is the creator and savior, is repeated over and over. We can find the theme of the Messiah everywhere in the Psalms with ease. The important missionary lesson for modern Christians is that the goal of any missionary work should be focused on the glory of God (Ps. 67:3-5), not humanism.²⁴ While the prophetic documents tell the election for service, Psalms declares that God elects God's people for the glory of God's own (Ps. 135:4). In Psalms, there appears again the idea of the returning of the heathen (Ps. 47:7; 68:31; 72:10; 86:9).

According to the Old Testament, mission is the proclamation of the absolute sovereignty of God so that all the nations may worship God. The proclamation of sovereignty is just to remind all the nations of their being God's creatures and God's being their creator. This will be done through the suffering servant in a dual way. First, through redemptive grace, which is given in the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ, the broken relationship between God and His creatures will be recovered. At the same time, through the social services and responsibilities of Christians who agreed to God's covenant and signed it with their faith in Jesus Christ, the lost kingdom of God will be recovered. The mission of the Old Testament is centripetal, because it is based on the eschatology, and the basic structure is

²⁴ Chun, Missiology, 46.

retrospective.

The New Testament

The New Testament is the book of mission. Without the missionary works of the Early Church, the New Testament would not have come to life.²⁵ For convenience, the mission of the New Testament will be dealt with in two categories: the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. In the gospels, the definition of mission or the issue of what mission is will be dealt with, and in the Acts, the concrete application and strategies of the mission will be mentioned.

The Gospels

The most important question about the mission in the gospels is whether Jesus had any intention of mission for the Gentiles. At a glance, Jesus does not seem to have any concern for the Gentiles. He said clearly that he had been sent only to the lost sheep of the people of Israel (Matt. 15:24). In many passages (such as Mark 12:1b; Matt. 8:12; 10:6; Luke 12:32; John 4:22), we can notice his concern only for the people of Israel. Moreover, in other passages (such as Matt. 6:7,32; 15:26; 23:15; Luke 4:27; 12:30; 21:24), he despised the Gentiles from the traditional Jewish point of view. When he sent his twelve disciples for the mission, he ordered them not to go to any gentile territory (Matt. 10:5-6). Sometimes Jesus did his ministry of teaching and healing

²⁵ Johannes Verkuyl, "The Biblical Foundations of World Mission," in The Biblical Foundations of Mission, ed. Myung-hyuk Kim (Seoul: Sung-kwang Literature, 1983), 184-85.

in some Gentile territories (Matt. 8:5-13; 15:21-28), but these trips originally seem to aim his ministry for the people of Israel who lived in those territories. Though Jesus' teaching had the idea of universalism, particularism was clear in his ministry.

However, it is too rash to conclude that Jesus had no intention of foreign mission for the Gentiles. We must deal with this issue with the recognition of "the historic context of revelation."²⁶ According to Bosch, the historical and social environments of Jesus were not good for the mission for the Gentiles. Moreover, at that time, the gospel which is the central point of evangelism was not complete yet. All this must be understood from the insight of the Heilsgeschichte, the history of salvation.

Jesus did not refuse to heal the Gentiles who had a great faith in the God of Israel and Jesus. He cured the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matt. 15:21ff.), and satisfied the request of a Roman military officer (Matt. 8:5ff.). Jesus expected that in the last days of human history all the nations would come to worship God with Israel (Matt. 8:11; 12:41b). This is what the later prophets prophesied (Isa. 2:2-4; 25:6-8, etc.). Rather, in some passages (such as Matt. 3:9; 12:41; 23:27; Luke 4:25-27; 13:1-3, 6-9), we see Jesus treating the Gentiles and the Israel people without any discrimination. From all these passages, it is clear that

²⁶ Blauw, 68.

Jesus had universalism in his mind, but he followed the Jewish particularism tactically.²⁷

His Lordship of all the nations was explicitly shown in his ministry and the titles that were used for naming him.²⁸ His suffering and death were for all mankind (Mark 10:45; 14:24). His entering into Jerusalem, riding on a colt (Mark 11:1-10), was the fulfillment of the prophecy of his being the prince of peace and the king of the world (Isa. 9:4-6; Zech. 9:9). Not only his ministry but also his titles indicate Jesus' Lordship over all the nations. The eschatological title of "Son of Man" describes Jesus as judge of all the nations at the end of this world's history. Even the Jewish title of "Son of David" describes him as king, not only of Israel but also of all the world (Ps. 110). These ministry and titles imply the universalism of the gospels, even though not of Jesus himself.

Now we come to the next question: Why did Jesus limit his ministry only to the people of Israel in spite of his universalism? We can give two answers to this question. First, Jesus seems to have followed the traditional particularism, because he believed that salvation should be

²⁷ This conclusion may be supported by the idea of the Messianic Secret, which is one of the main theological issues for biblical theologians. Jesus prohibited his followers from proclaiming his being the promised Messiah before the proper time came--the resurrection. See William Wrede, The Messianic Secret (London: James Clarke, 1971).

²⁸ Chai, 97.

offered for the people of Israel before the Gentiles. In Luke 24:47, Jesus clearly says that the message about repentance and the forgiveness of sins will begin in Jerusalem and will be preached to all nations. The kingdom of God is at hand, but the eschatological revelation is not yet come. Second, Jesus seems to have done so, because he thought that there should be the shedding of the blood of the sacrificed sheep before the morning of the kingdom of God has broken (cf. Isa. 53:11; Mark 10:45; 14:24).²⁹ These answers can be supported by the fact that Jesus had quite different positions before resurrection and after resurrection. The clear command to go out to the whole world and to preach the gospel, which was quite different from what had been given before the resurrection, was made after he rose again from the dead after three days.

Some scholars, who accept the principles of higher criticism, may ascribe this difference to the redaction of evangelists who redacted the present gospels out of various materials. According to these scholars, the later command of foreign evangelism is not from Jesus, but evangelists who added their theology as they desired.³⁰ This is what the

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Adolf Harnack, The Mission and Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 37-41.

redaction criticism says.³¹ According to the understanding of redaction criticism, the evangelists had materials that had been believed to be delivered directly from the first generation of the followers of Jesus Christ. When they redacted these documents, evangelists not only arranged them, but also interpreted them and added their own theology.³² If we see the differences of Jesus' commands for mission from this point of view, it would be far easier to answer the question of why they are; the command to go to the all nations was not Jesus' own, but later evangelists' theology.

This interpretation of redaction criticism does not mean that therefore the redacted command of the evangelists does not have any authority or meaning for us. The authority of the Bible is not dependent upon who the writer was or what the source was. We see the Bible with respect and believe that the Bible is the Word of God, because we agree with Paul who declares that all Scripture is inspired by God, in 1 Tim. 3:16. We also decided to accept the agreement of the Early Church leaders who expanded "the Scripture" of Paul to include the other books which were never mentioned by Paul.

The last statement the church leaders discussed and

³¹ See R. H. Stein, "What is Redaktionsgeschichte?" Journal of Biblical Literature 88 (1969): 45-56.; Norman Perrin, What is Redaction Criticism? (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969); and Joachim Rohde, Rediscovering the Teaching of the Evangelists (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1968).

³² Gunther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth, and Heinz J. Held, Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 55.

agreed to expand "the Scripture" of Paul to include some other books. This never meant that the present books of the New Testament, which were believed and confessed to be the Word of the living God by the Christians, were decided to be included in the Bible by the Early Church leaders. The New Testament books were chosen through the flow of time. This means that it was not just some leaders of the church, but the whole church or the Holy Spirit who had been working in the body of Christ that let the present books of the New Testament be the canon. This does not mean that the results of the study of redaction criticism are wrong or have no meaning at all. The redactional process of evangelists is very important to understand the background and history of the canon. What is important is that it should help make our faith firm, not ridicule our faith in the Word of God.

The process of canonization of the Old Testament is the same as this New Testament process. It was officially declared as the Jewish canon at the Yamnia Conference in A.D. 90. At that time, all the Jewish leaders did was just to confirm or decide to accept what the long flow of time had decided and chosen. Long before the conference, the present books of the Old Testament had been recognized as canon by the Israel community. Also long before the meeting where church leaders officially declared the present books of New Testament as canon, the present New Testament had been recognized as the Word of God by the Christians. What the sources were or who

were the writers are not important at all. Though the original writer of the book of Hebrews is not known, Hebrews has the authority as the Word of living God. We do regard the passages or messages of the gospels as the Word of God, not because they are ipsissima verba, but because they are parts of the whole Bible.

Therefore, whether the command after resurrection was from Jesus himself or from the evangelists is not the point at all. As far as we believe, the gospels are the Word of God. Two different commands of Jesus are the Will of God. The former command of mission is only for the people of Israel, and the latter one is for the whole of mankind, including all the nations. In the gospels, mission as evangelism is clear. According to the gospels, mission is proclaiming the gospel which has been fulfilled in the Christ Event (His suffering, death, resurrection, the Ascension and the parousia which will happen at the end of this human history).

Social responsibility of the followers of Jesus is mentioned clearly in some passages, but it seems to be the issue of soteriology, not of mission. According to the gospels, this command, of social responsibility, is very closely related to salvation itself rather than to mission (Matt. 7:21-23; 25:31-46). When we say that mission is the sole goal of the body of Christ, we mean that mission is the new duty of God's chosen people, presupposing that the problem of salvation is already solved. But in the gospel, Jesus

relates the issue of salvation or entering the kingdom of God with that of social services.

Who will enter the kingdom of God? Or who will be saved? To this question Jesus replies that only those who do what God wants them to do will enter the heavenly kingdom of God (Matt. 7:21). Then, what are those things God wants us to do? In Matt. 25:31ff., Jesus shows examples of them: feeding the hungry, giving a drink to the thirsty, receiving a stranger in our homes, clothing the naked, taking care of the sick, and visiting the prisoners. This is exactly what the ecumenical movement calls humanization or liberation.

According to the gospels, mission is made up of three factors (Matt. 28:19-20):

1. To go to all peoples everywhere (Mark 16:15a; Luke 24:47b).
2. To baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit through proclaiming the gospel (Mark 16:15b; Luke 24:47b); and
3. To teach them to obey everything Jesus has commanded of us.

All these factors are concrete stages or steps for mission or discipling. According to the Greek version, to make a disciple is the main verb and the other three words appear in the form of a participle.³³ Therefore, the biblical definition of mission should include all these three factors.

³³ Chun, Missiology, 67.

The first factor is cross-cultural evangelism, and the second is solely evangelization.³⁴ The first one is very important, because during his ministry before resurrection, Jesus did not show this intention. The evangelization of his or her people must be called mission, as well as the evangelization of foreigners. It is not biblical usage to divide foreign evangelism and domestic evangelism. Both of them are the mission which Jesus commanded. But evangelization is not the whole mission. It is no more than half of mission. To teach those new converts to obey what Jesus commanded is the other half part of mission. Roughly speaking, it is an important part of mission to help other Christians to do their social responsibilities as the light of this dark world and as the salt of this rotten world.

From this point of view, the ecumenical movement made a crucial mistake in confusing or identifying doing something about helping or teaching others to do effective work. Moreover, social responsibility is far more important in the teaching of Jesus than the ecumenicals think it is. Unfortunately, the ecumenicals seem to try to discuss an issue of soteriology, in the class of missiology, which can be likened to an elective course or applied one in Christian faith as soteriology is likened to a mandatory course or basic one.

³⁴ Because the baptizing of converts implies that they are made responsible church members, some scholars such as Donald McGavran define mission as church growth.

The same logic can be reversely applied to the evangelicals before the Chicago Declaration (1973), which insisted upon the necessity of social responsibility of Christians. They made a crucial mistake, which seems to be more crucial than that of the ecumenicals, in taking away or at least neglecting the third factor of teaching Christians to obey what Jesus commanded.³⁵ What is lucky is that, since the Chicago Declaration, the evangelical group began to treat mission as it is described in the Bible, through recognizing the cruciality of the social responsibility of Christians.

Acts

While the gospels answer the question of what mission is, the Acts and the epistles offer an example of how we should perform the Great Commission. The Acts is dealing with how Early Church Christians carried out Jesus' order to make all the nations disciples by going, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded. The most important passage in the Acts is, "When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (1:8). This verse gives the overall view of the whole

³⁵ See Rev. 22:19, "And if anyone takes anything away from the prophetic words of this book, God will take away from him his share of the fruit of the tree of life and of the Holy City, which are described in this book."

Book of Acts.

According to Luke-Acts, Jesus ordered that the disciples had to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit would come upon them in order that they could be the right witnesses for Jesus.³⁶ The whole missionary work of Acts was done by the leadership of the Holy Spirit. It was not the people but the Holy Spirit that led the Early Church to do their missionary works. The first appointing of Christian missionaries was ordered by the Holy Spirit.³⁷ The Holy Spirit chose the proper persons for the job by Himself, and ordered the Antioch church to set apart Saul and Barnabas. Barnabas was the pastor-in-charge, sent by the Jerusalem church, and Saul was the associate pastor chosen by Barnabas.³⁸ The Holy Spirit even concretely indicated the next destination for their journey.³⁹ The Philippi church was founded by the Holy Spirit through a miraculous work.⁴⁰ For this reason, the Acts of the Apostles received the nickname of "the Acts of the Holy Spirit."⁴¹ For a better understanding of missiology, we must

³⁶ See Luke 24:49, "but you must wait in the city until the power from above comes down upon you."

³⁷ Acts 13:1-3.

³⁸ Acts 11:22-26.

³⁹ Acts 16:6-10.

⁴⁰ Acts 16:16-34.

⁴¹ Chang-hwan Park, Introduction to the Bible (Seoul: Committee on Education, General Assembly of Korean Presbyterian Churches, 1982), 198.

study the Holy Spirit and His power. Without the Holy Spirit, the mission would not have come true. Pneumatology, a study of the Holy Spirit, must be ahead of missiology. W. Freytag pointed out that in the past, mission had problems, but now mission is the problem.⁴² If we can go further than Freytag, we must say that in the past, missiology was the problem, but now pneumatology is the problem.

After the disciples accomplish the job of pneumatology,⁴³ they come across the geographical list of territories for their future mission journey: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the Gentile territory. The whole of Acts is arranged according to this order. Part of 2:14-6:7 is the history which happened in Jerusalem. Acts 6:8-8:3 is the history of the martyrdom of Stephen and the following persecutions, which let the mission of the Early Church come to the next stage. Acts 8:4-12:25 is the history in Judea and Samaria. Chapter 13 and the following chapters are the history of mission to the end of the earth.

In the history of the mission of the Early Church, there are four turning points. They are the first Pentecostal event (Chapter 2), the martyrdom of Stephen (6:8-7:60), the conversion of Saul (9:1-19; 22:6-16), and conversion of the Roman military officer called Cornelius (10:1-48). As already pointed out, the Pentecostal event is the starting point of

⁴² See Chun, Missiology, 17.

⁴³ Acts 2:1-13.

all the mission history of the Christian Church. Though this was not the starting point of the Christian church itself,⁴⁴ it surely was the beginning of the Christian mission.

However, the Jerusalem church did not pay any attention to the centrifugal mission. This seems to be because of their strong expectation of the impending parousia. That is why God allowed the church to be persecuted. As a result of their neglecting the centrifugal mission, the persecution fell upon the Jerusalem church. After this persecution, they began to scatter from Jerusalem toward other Judean areas and the Samaritan cities.

The conversion of Saul was the timely preparation by God for the Gentile mission; and the salvation of Cornelius family was the preparation by God for the theological discussion on the Gentile mission.⁴⁵ The Acts ends with the sermon of Paul

⁴⁴ This is an issue that should be dealt with from the pneumatological point of view. Generally the first Pentecost is regarded as the beginning of the Christian church. But Torrey regards it as the beginning of church growth. He thinks the church was started with the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He interprets the foundation of the Christian church from the pneumatological point of view. He explains when Jesus appeared to his disciples on the evening of the resurrection day, and breathed on them, telling them to receive the Holy Spirit (John 20:19-23), Jesus founded the church. Fifty days after that evening, approximately 120 members of the church were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) and the church began to grow. See Archer Torrey, "Baptism with the Holy Spirit," in Holy Spirit, ed. Full Gospel Institution of Education (Seoul: Young-san Publishing, 1981), 75-126.

⁴⁵ Acts 11:1-18; 15:1-34.

in Rome.⁴⁶ Theologically, the Acts does not end there, though it ends the literary framework. The Acts have been continually adding to its pages since Paul preached in Rome in a status as a prisoner. According to the Acts, our missionary job is to let the Acts of the Apostles continue in the work of discipleship throughout the world.

In dealing with Acts for missionary study, we must survey the sermons that were preached by the first missionaries. This would be helpful because it would remind us of what mission should be. As pointed out, mission includes work to baptize people through proclaiming the gospel. Out of the sermons of the first missionaries,⁴⁷ we must learn the contents the proclamation should include.

The Luke-Acts told about the basic structure of the gospel that would be preached for all the nations, as in Luke 24:47. According to this verse, it is made up of two parts: message about repentance and the message about forgiveness of sins. The latter part is usually used as the body of the sermons of the Acts, and the former part was used as the conclusion or application. The body of the sermons has at least three factors.

⁴⁶ Acts 28:16-28.

⁴⁷ Here, I will mention only the sermons of Peter. There are four of his sermons in Acts (2:14-36; 3:11-26; 4:8-12; 10:34-43). The first was delivered on the Pentecostal day, the second was given at the Jerusalem Temple just after he cured a lame man, the third was preached in front of the Council, and the last sermon was for the Cornelius family in Caesaria.

The first factor is the message about fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament.⁴⁸ All the foundations of the gospel were from the Old Testament. This is partially because the first audience of the gospel were the Jews. The important reason for this was because the Old Testament was the preparation of God for the Christ Event. As discussed, without the foundation of the Old Testament, the Lordship of Jesus over all the nations could not have been preached. Because of this very reason, even the Gentile Christian churches regarded the Jewish canon as their canon.

The second factor of the sermons, is about the Christ Event⁴⁹ and its meaning from the Jewish point of view. With the Christ Event, especially with the resurrection and the Ascension, the New Israel began.⁵⁰ This is, in a sense, a detailed explanation of the first factor. This explains how the prophecy of the Old Testament was accomplished. The most essential part of the Christ Event (among the sufferings, death, and resurrection/Ascension) was the resurrection/Ascension. While the sufferings and death were understood as the fulfillment of the promise to send His servant, the resurrection/Ascension was the proof of Jesus being God who

⁴⁸ Acts 2:14; 3:12-16; 4:8-12; 10:34-43. See also 1 Pet. 1:3,10-12; 4:7.

⁴⁹ Acts 2:20-31; 3:13-14; 10:43 See also 1 Pet. 1:20-21.

⁵⁰ Acts 2:22-26; 3:13; 4:11; 5:30-31; 10:42. See also 1 Pet. 1:21; 2:7,24; 3:22.

was incarnated into human flesh.⁵¹

The third factor is the mention about the Holy Spirit,⁵² and the parousia.⁵³ The Holy Spirit and the parousia have intimate relationship with each other. In some manuscripts of Luke, the part of the Lord's Prayer, "may your kingdom come," reads "may the Holy Spirit come."⁵⁴ This indicates that some Early Church Christians identified the parousia with the descending of the power of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecostal day. However, in Peter's sermons, mention of the Holy Spirit has quite a different meaning. According to Peter, the power of the Holy Spirit, which was given to the church, was the sign for the Lordship and glory of Jesus Christ; and the parousia will come in the future at the close of this human history as beginning the promised kingdom of God. Peter seems to understand the power of the Holy Spirit as being an intermediate between the resurrection/Ascension

⁵¹ This issue is addressed very clearly in the Gospel according to John. This sensational idea of Jesus being God Himself or the higher christology is clearly written in John 1:1-5 and 20:28. Mark usually uses the title "Son of Man" for Jesus, which has a very eschatological character. Matthew uses that of "Rabbi," which is very traditional. Luke uses the title kurios or "lord," which implies the influence of the Greco-Roman mystery religions. The favorite title of John is "son of God," which is quite different from others. The Johanne title most clearly indicates the divinity of Jesus.

⁵² Acts 2:33; 5:32.

⁵³ Acts 3:19-23; 10:42. See also 1 Pet.1:5,7,13; 4:5,13,17,18; 5:1,4.

⁵⁴ Deuk-joong Kim, "Seminar on Luke-Acts," lecture delivered at the Methodist Theological Seminary, Seoul, Fall 1983.

and the parousia.

The conclusion or application of these factors appears in the form of encouragement to repent and accept Jesus as one's personal savior. After people would confess their faith in Jesus Christ, they were asked to be baptized. This is very important for setting a limit in the missionary works. According to the Acts, as some church growth scholars insist, mission must be expanded to include the increase in membership; for, baptizing will result in increase in membership. According to Donald McGavran's definition, mission is to persuade people to be a responsible member of a church through proclaiming Jesus as the only savior.⁵⁵ For McGavran, mission is church growth.⁵⁶ On the basis of the Acts, he is right in identifying mission with church growth. This is supported by the understanding of the gospels, too. The characteristics of the message preached by the Early Church are as follows:⁵⁷

1. It was Christ-centered.
2. It was simple.
3. It was a proclamation, not a dialogue or discussion.

Do the Acts match well with the concept of the mission of the gospels? We have defined mission, on the basis of the

⁵⁵ McGavran, 56.

⁵⁶ See Ho-jin Chun, Mission and the Korean Church, 29.

⁵⁷ Melvin L. Hodges, A Theology of the Church and Its Mission (Springfield, Mo.: Gospel Publishing House, 1977), 140-41.

Great Commission, as discipling the people through baptizing and teaching. The Acts seems to match only with the first part, baptizing or church growth, and there seem to be few passages in the Acts that tell about the job of teaching. However, though there is no passage that describes teaching people what Jesus commanded, we can find some passages⁵⁸ that show the clear results of that job; for, sharing one's properties with others must be the results of hard training. Therefore, the mission of the gospels is correctly and properly applied by the mission of the Acts.

Though all missionary works in the Acts were done directly by the Holy Spirit, we can find some clear human strategies. For this issue, the mission of Paul offers some very proper sources. Chun explains the four strategies for mission out of the experience of Paul:⁵⁹ group approach, team work, acknowledgement of cultural differences, and tactical consideration of the place. Though salvation is clearly an individual problem, the first missionaries tried to have an audience before preaching the gospel. The mission of the Acts was performed by a team of preachers rather than an individual. This strategy can be supported by the theological issue of the "we" source.⁶⁰ The third strategy is very important for the issue of an indigenization theory. The

⁵⁸ Acts 2:43-47; 4:32-37; 5:1-11.

⁵⁹ Chun, Missiology, 73-75.

⁶⁰ See Deuk-joong Kim.

first Church Council was held in Jerusalem in order to solve the problem of circumcision of the Gentiles. They agreed to discern the gospel from the Jewish culture. The last one is a very delicate issue. Paul tried to sow the gospel in the dense cities, as much as possible. He tried to build up the church in the downtown area of any city, and let this church take care of the suburban areas of that city.

We have dealt with only the gospels to get the biblical concept of mission. We have surveyed the Acts to see how this concept of mission was applied in the real situation, with the presupposition that mission should be based on the Great Commission. It seems almost all the epistles were written in order to answer the specific questions of various churches in various situations. The Johanne epistles and the later letters of Paul are ecclesiology-centered, even opposing mission.⁶¹

⁶¹ Hahn, 152.

CHAPTER 4

Toward the Twenty-first Century Ministry of the Korean Church

A Brief Historical Survey of the Korean Churchfrom a Missional Point of ViewThe Probability of the Introduction of Christian Faithto Korea in the Late Seventh Century

Scholars guess that the first contact of the Korean people with the Christian faith would have happened in the late seventh century or in the early eighth century. At that time, the Korean people were ruled over by the Shinra dynasty which was the first unified government on the Korean peninsular. The Shinra dynasty had a very intimate diplomatic relationship with the Dang dynasty that was ruling over China and helped Shinra to unify the Korean peninsular in A.D. 668.

It was in A.D. 635 when Alopen, the Nestorian missionary, arrived in China. The Nestorian Church was regarded as heretical since the Ephesus Council (431). After the death of the leader of that church, Nestorius, they moved to the Persian territory.¹ They began to send missionaries to various countries from the early seventh century, and sent Alopen for a mission to China in 635. Three years later (638), the Chinese government of the Dang dynasty allowed Nestorian Christianity as one of the official religions. Nestorian Christianity began to be called Dae-jin-gyo, which

¹ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, A History of the Korean Church, 2 vols. (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1989-1990), 1:26-27.

means the religion of Rome, or Gyung-gyo, which means the bright and just religion, and later was called Dae-jin-gyung-gyo.² The Dae-jin-gyung-gyo came to its end in 845 when a law called Hoen-chang-myul-bup, which was legislated only for the persecution of Buddhism (that had a serious conflict with the government at that time) was enacted. Though the aim of that law was only toward Buddhism, all other foreign religions, including Dae-jin-gynug-gyo were persecuted by this law.³ Unfortunately many Gyung-gyo Christians gave up their faith in the face of severe persecution; consequently the faith was reduced to a religion of the past.

During the vigorous life (638-845) of Nestorian Christianity in China, Korea had a very intimate relationship with China not only politically but also socially, economically, and culturally.⁴ Though we do not have any historical documents at all, there might be some possibilities of Nestorian Christianity being introduced to Korean visitors to China. Moreover, there are some records that imply contact with Korean traders with Persian areas at that time. In an old Korean history book, Sam-kuk-sa-gui, there appears a list of goods such as clothes and jewels that must have been

² Ibid., 1:28.

³ Ibid., 1:31.

⁴ Gui-back Lee, A New Study of Korean History (Seoul: Iljogak, 1977), 91.

imported from the Persian world.⁵ Because Persia was the stronghold of Nestorian Christianity, these records support the assumption that Korea might have had the first contact with the Christian faith in the late seventh century or at least in the early eighth century.

It was an English female archeologist, E. A. Gordon, who mentioned these possibilities for the first time. During her journey for study of the introduction of Christian faith to Asian countries, she visited Korea and stayed for four years. After her four year study and examination of the historical relics⁶ of the Shinra dynasty, she concluded that Nestorian Christianity, Dae-jin-gyung-gyo, was introduced to Korea from China during the Shinra dynasty.⁷ There are many scholars, such as Yang-sun Kim, Kwang-soo Kim, Yun-tae Oh, and Jang-sik Lee, who accept the assumption of Gordon, but there are not enough proofs for it yet. Whether this is true or not is not important to this project, because the possible Nestorian Christianity, even though E. A. Gordon's assumption were true,

⁵ See Yong-bum Lee, "The Development of Foreign Trade," in Korean History vol. 3, ed. Committee on Editing Korean History (Seoul: CEKH, 1984), 510-25.

⁶ Yang-sun Kim agrees with her conclusion by regarding the cruciform stone, which was found in 1956 at a famous Buddhist temple that is located in the capital city of the Shinra dynasty (Gyung-joo), as the Christian cross derived from Nestorian Christianity. See A Study of Korean Church History (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1971), 27-9.

⁷ Kwang-soo Kim, The History of the Transmission of Christianity to Korea (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1974), 27.

did not survive in Korea successfully and did not have any influence upon later Korean history.

Founding of the Korean Church

The first protestant ordained missionaries to Korea were sent by the American Presbyterian church and the American Methodist church. H. G. Underwood was the Presbyterian missionary, and H. G. Appenzeller was the Methodist missionary.⁸ They left the U.S. in 1884, and spent almost one year in Japan preparing their Korean mission. At that time, a layman missionary already existed in Korea. It was September 2, 1884 that a medical doctor, H. N. Allen, arrived in Korea. His legal status was as an official doctor for the American legation in Seoul, but he was a layman missionary sent by the American Presbyterian church. He did his missionary job very successfully, though he officially hid his being a missionary.⁹

Rev. Underwood, Rev. Appenzeller, and Mrs. Appenzeller landed on Korea in April 5, 1885, as did Rev. W.B. Scranton and his mother in May 3, 1885. However, long before these protestant missionaries came to Korea, there had been many

⁸ This Methodist missionary was a member of the Presbyterian church and was trained by the Presbyterian church. See Gyungbae Min, Church History of Korea (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1973), 131-32. This fact is very important for understanding that there are no theological differences between the Methodist church and the Presbyterian church in Korea, but only differences between liberal churches and conservative or evangelical churches.

⁹ Min, 128.

Korean protestant Christians.¹⁰ The first thing that the Western missionaries were asked to do was to baptize the Korean Christians who had accepted the gospel. This is exactly the same as in the case of the Korean Catholic church.

The first Catholic ordained missionary to Korea was a Chinese priest, Moon-mo Choo. He crossed the Abrock River, which flows along the border between Korea and China, in December 23, 1794.¹¹ He was sent by Bishop Guvea, of the Peking Parish, because the already organized Korean Catholic church had been asking Guvea to send an ordained priest for sacraments since 1787.¹² This is a very important factor in studying Korean church history; for, without understanding the autogenetic factor of the Korean church, it is impossible to understand the unique traditions, its rapid growth, and the present situation of the Korean church.

Establishment of the Korean Catholic church. The first contact of Korea with Christianity happened in the early seventeenth century. At that time, Koreans did not have any interest in Christianity as a religion, but they were very interested in Western things which were introduced to China by the Catholic missionaries. In 1603, a world map called Gon-yu-man-kuk-ji-do, which was made by the famous Catholic missionary Matthew Ricci in 1602, was imported to Korea by a

¹⁰ Ibid., 146.

¹¹ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:82.

¹² Ibid., 1:74-76.

Korean diplomat.¹³ As Korean scholars began to contact Western civilization through scientific products, their curiosity compelled them to read Western books, including the Bible and other religious books, which were translated into Chinese by the missionaries. But Korean scholars read the Bible and other religious books only for academic purposes for almost a century.¹⁴ The leader of this movement of studying the Bible as a Western science was Ik Lee.

The first convert to the Christian faith was You-han Hong, who was the pupil of Ik Lee. You-han Hong decided to follow the religious regulations of the Bible in 1770. He kept the Sabbath rule, and began to pray regularly.¹⁵ Seven years later (1777), the first Bible study group was formed, and members of that group agreed to keep the Sabbath rule and to dedicate themselves to both morning prayer and evening prayer regularly. The leader of this group was Byuck Lee.¹⁶ However, they could not be baptized or participate in the sacraments, because in Korea there was no ordained priest at that time. Byuck Lee asked his friend, Seung-hoon Lee, who was going to visit the capital city of China, to be baptized by the Catholic priest and to bring the Christian books and the crucifix. As requested by Byuck Lee, Seung-hoon Lee was

¹³ Ibid., 1:65.

¹⁴ Ibid., 1:66-67.

¹⁵ Ibid., 1:68.

¹⁶ Ibid., 1:69-71.

baptized in January, 1784 with the baptismal name, Peter, by Father J. J. de Grammont.

After his return from China, Seung-hoon Lee baptized his Christian brothers Byuck Lee and Il-shin Kwon. B. Lee was given the Christian name, John. It was in September, 1784. Within one year, the three Christians obtained many converts in various areas. As the Christian community grew, they felt the need of sacraments. So they decided to elect a bishop among the Fathers by themselves. At that time, they had Fathers already, though not ordained priests. It was their custom to call the senior Christian who baptized them Father. They elected Father Il-shin Kwon as their bishop, because he was the eldest Father. The other Fathers were ordained as priests by this Korean bishop, and were given the authority to perform the Christian sacraments such as the Holy Communion, Confirmation and the Confession.¹⁷

In 1787, one of the Korean Fathers found that their organization of Christian church and the sacraments was being led by their own priests, who had no relationship with the Roman Catholic Church and thus acted against church law. As soon as he pointed out this fact, the Korean church decided to stop all the sacraments, and sent a representative to Peking in 1789.¹⁸ Soon after there followed a great persecution by the Korean government. All the first Korean Christians were

¹⁷ Ibid., 1:74-75.

¹⁸ Ibid., 1:76.

scattered like sheep without a shepherd. The autogenic Korean church seemed to disappear from history. But God did not allow them to disappear. With the arrival of the first ordained Catholic priest, Father Moon-mo Joo, in December 23, 1794, the almost dead Korean Catholic church was resuscitated.

The Korean Catholic church was formed by Bible reading. However, they did not try to translate the Chinese Bible into Korean. If they had translated the Bible into Korean, the present Catholic church would have had far more tremendous results. Anyway, it started with the Bible, and this formed the Bible-centered tradition of the Korean church.

Establishment of the Korean protestant church. While the first Korean Catholic Christians were from the aristocratic class, the protestant church was formed among the middle class. In the nineteenth century, the north-western part of the Korean peninsular was a very rich area due to trade with China. Therefore, it was natural that an independent middle class should have appeared in this area from the early nineteenth century.¹⁹ It was those from this rich and erudite class who became the first Korean protestant Christians.²⁰ The middle class had many chances to visit China for their business, and the Western protestant missionaries, who were

¹⁹ Kwang-rin Lee, "Protestant Christianity and the North-Western Area of Korea in the Nineteenth Century," in A Study of the Enlightenment Thoughts in Korea, ed. Iljogak (Seoul: Iljogak, 1979), 245.

²⁰ Pyung-yang was the central city in that area, and later it became the Korean Jerusalem.

interested in a Korean mission but could not enter into Korea because of the anti-Western-religion law, could contact them with ease.

As the first Catholic Christians accepted the gospel through their reading and studying the Bible, the first protestant Christians accepted the Christian faith through reading the Bible, too. John Ross was sent by the Scotch United Presbyterian Church for the Korean mission in 1872. But he could not get permission to enter into Korea from the Korean government, and had to stay in a Chinese city, Youngku, which was very close to a Korean free city, Corean Gate. In October 9, 1874, Ross had a chance to have his first visit to Corean Gate. There he met a Korean trader, and gave him a New Testament Bible written in Chinese. The Korean gentleman gave the Chinese New Testament to his son. The son shared the Bible with his friends, and after they studied the Bible, they were converted to the Christian faith. Exactly speaking, it was not just the Christian faith they converted to, but the faith that the Bible witnesses, through reading the Bible. Some of the young Korean converts came to Youngku in 1878 to be baptized by Rev. Ross of their own accord. But Ross could not baptize them, because, in Korea, it was almost the same as being sentenced to a death penalty to be baptized. Ross asked them to consult their parents, and promised to baptize them if their parents would agree. Next year, only one man, whose name is not known yet, came back to Ross, and was baptized in

January, 1879. He was the first baptized Korean protestant Christian. After a few months, Hong-joon Baek, the son of the gentleman who was given the Bible by Rev. Ross in 1874, came to be baptized. In July of the same year, Eung-chan Lee, who had been helping Ross with his translation of the Bible into Korean, was baptized. In December of the same year, a relative of Eung-chan Lee, who was an eastern medical doctor, was baptized. The year 1879 is a great year in Korean Protestant Church History; for, that year the first four Korean Christians were baptized by Rev. Ross.²¹

One year before this great year of 1879, Ross finished the translation of the gospel of Mark and the gospel of John into Korean. Eung-chan Lee, who was baptized in July 1879, had helped him with this translation. After E. Lee returned to Korea, Ross met another Korean trader, Sang-ryun Suh. Ross asked him to help translate the gospel of Luke. Due to his help, Ross finished his job in 1882. In 1883, the Acts, and in 1884, the gospels of Matthew and Mark were finished, and in the long run in 1887, Ross finished his great job of the translation of the whole New Testament into Korean.²² After S. Suh returned to Korea in the spring of 1883, he did his best to convert the Korean people to the Christian faith, to have only seventy people converted in two years. He established a local church in Sol-nai, Hwang-hai province in

²¹ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:142-45.

²² Min, 143-44.

1885.²³ It was this church that asked the first missionary, Rev. Underwood, to baptize their new members, as soon as he arrived in Korea.

The first Christian who was baptized in Korea was Choon-gyung Noh. He was interested in the Christian faith, and obtained the gospels of Mark and Luke by chance. After he read those two gospels, he decided to convert to Christianity, and was baptized by Rev. Underwood on July 18, 1886.²⁴

The Korean Catholic and Protestant churches were organized separately, but in a same way, through the written Word of God, and were helped to mature by Western missionary priests. This is very important for understanding the Bible-centered tradition of Korean Christianity.

Growth of the Korean Protestant Church

After the two Wars (1894-95/1904-5). In the late nineteenth century, many countries so strongly desired to have exclusive relationships with Korea that there broke out two wars between these foreign troops in the territory of Korea. The first war was between Japan and China (1894-1895), and the second war was between Japan and Russia (1904-1905). The war between Japan and China was waged in the north-western area of the Korean peninsular. But during the war, the churches were the only safe places for the Korean people who had nothing to

²³ Ibid., 145-46. See also Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:243.

²⁴ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:242.

do with that war; for, the leaders of the Korean churches were Americans and their churches were regarded as having extraterritorial rights by the foreign troops. For this reason, during and after this war, rapid church growth began. The second war between Japan and Russia brought the same result.²⁵ Refer to the chart which shows the membership of the Methodist church and the Presbyterian church between 1888 and 1906.

.....			
YWAR	AMERICAN METHODIST	SOUTH METHODIST	PRESBYTERIAN
.....			
	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
.....			
1888	38	---	---
1889	45	---	---
1890	--	---	---
1891	73	---	15
1892	159	---	---
1893	241	---	---
1894	335	---	40
1895	410	---	180
1896	817	---	2,000
1897	1,379	156	6,800
1898	2,058	---	7,500

²⁵ Kenneth S. Latourette, Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, vol.3 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 448-49.

1899	2,616	---	9,364
1900	3,897	---	13,569
1901	4,768	649	14,784
1902	5,855	831	19,327
1903	6,915	964	24,971
1904	6,985	1,003	26,554
1905	7,796	1,208	37,407
1906	12,791	2,334	56,943

.....

The function of the church as an extraterritorial place was not the only reason for this rapid growth. Through hard experiences, the Christians were trained and reflected a firm faith and began to evangelize their friends and neighbors.²⁶

Rev. Underwood tried to evangelize the political prisoners, who were imprisoned between 1899 and 1904. With the work of the Holy Spirit, his efforts produced a great harvest. Many political leaders were converted to the Christian faith.²⁷ With this conversion of the higher class, a conflict developed between the classes.²⁸ Some of this new group wanted to reform corrupt society using the political power of the church.²⁹ This is very similar to what the ecumenical movement calls mission, or social responsibility of

²⁶ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:257.

²⁷ Ibid., 1:263-65.

²⁸ Ibid., 1:266.

²⁹ Ibid., 1:260-61.

the Christian church.

Pyung-yang Revival Movement (1907). This great Korean awakening movement was prepared by God since 1903. At that time, as a result of the war between Japan and China, the Western missionaries were regarded as a very powerful group and began to be respected from the secular point of view. They stopped having a hard time in their mission work; instead, they began to build luxurious parsonages and even seemed to enjoy their vacations in a morning calm country, Korea.

In 1903, there was a prayer meeting of the missionaries in the Yon-san area. The main speaker was the female Methodist missionary, M. C. White, who was working for China. Since 1900, there had been great persecution in China. The missionaries who attended that meeting were told of such a serious situation within China and the great troubles that their colleagues faced, and began to repent themselves. It was started by R. A. Hardie. He confessed in public his arrogance and lack of qualifications.³⁰ As he confessed, he had an experience of being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.³¹ At the next convocation held in January, 1904, the Canadian presbyterian missionary, A. F. Robb, had the same

³⁰ Taik-boo Chun, The History of the Development of the Korean Church (Seoul: Korea Christian Publishing, 1987), 157.

³¹ L. G. Paik, The History of Protestant Mission in Korea, 1832-1910 (Seoul: Yonsei University Press, 1973), 384.

experience as did Hardie.³² There followed many revival meetings in various areas, and the culmination of this Korean pentecostal movement was the Pyung-yang Revival Rally. It was held in January, 1907, and the main speaker was the lay elder, Sun-joo Guill. On the first night, there gathered around 1,500 Christians. They had the same spiritual experience with the first Pentecostal Movement in the upper room of the gospel of Mark.³³ At the Edinburgh Conference (1910), the missionaries reported this revival movement as a pure pentecostal experience.³⁴ After this revival rally, there followed a great church growth. Refer to the chart which compares the numbers of churches and members in 1905 and 1907.

.....					
YEAR	CHURCH	MINISTRY	BAPTIZED	ACCEPTED	OFFERING
.....					
1905	321	470	9,761	30,136	1,352,867
1907	642	1,045	18,964	99,300	5,319,785
.....					
CHANGE(%)	+200	+222.3	+194.2	+329.5	+393.2
.....					

The revival movement brought some important changes. First, the Korean church had a vivid experience with the

³² Taik-boo Chun, The History of the Development of the Korean Church, 174-205.

³³ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:271.

³⁴ Min, 262-63.

living God and with the active Holy Spirit. Second, the conflict between the native Christians and the foreign missionaries was eliminated. Third, it improved the morality of the Korean church.³⁵ Last, it enlightened the Bible study and prayer meeting; and as a result of this revival movement, the Korean church began having the morning prayer meeting.³⁶

Third growth period of the Korean church after 1919. The third growth in membership happened after 1919. On March 1, 1919, the Korean people rose up to declare their independence from the Japanese occupation which started on August 29, 1910. This was led by 33 religious leaders, and more than half of them were Christian leaders. Before this Independence Declaration Movement, the Christian church was regarded as if it was in favor with the Japanese government. This view of the Korean church was right in a sense. The Korean church was still under the influences of English and American missionaries. These two Western countries were in alliance with Japan. England promised to approve the Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsular in 1902 and 1905, and the U.S. promised to approve occupation in 1905, because they wanted Japan to prohibit Russian troops from coming down southward. Therefore, the England and American missionaries

³⁵ The tradition of the Korean church which prohibits drinking alcohol and smoking, began with this revival movement. See Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1:272.

³⁶ Ibid., 1:275.

did not seem to want the Korean church to be involved in such a delicate political situation.³⁷ Moreover, the Korean Christians, since the revival movement in Pyung-yang (1907), had been fascinated with only the spiritual experience so strongly that they did not like paying attention to secular affairs such as political issues. Therefore, it was a natural result that the non-Christians should have misunderstood the Christians as traitors to Korea.

However, the Christians and their leaders played a great role in the Independence Declaration Movement. Though this movement did not succeed in getting independence from Japan, it brought many positive results for the Korean people and the Korean church. One of them, for the church, was that non-Christians began to see the Christians as patriots. This change of view resulted in a great growth in membership. This was the third period of growth of the Korean church. After this Independence Declaration Movement, the Korean church was divided into two trends: a more spiritual trend and a more social trend. The first group put an emphasis only upon the mystery experience at the spiritual level, while the second

³⁷ Some think that the missionaries intentionally prohibited the Christians from having any interest in the Korean political situation. See Min, 243-44. Though there were some pastors in the U.S. who supported the Japanese occupation theologically, as Min has pointed out, I do not think so; for, they were not the missionaries. As we have studied already, at that time the Western church regarded mission simply as the gaining of souls, and avoided mentioning the social problems. The attitude of the Western missionaries would better be understood from their theological position, not from their political or nationalistic position.

group paid more attention to the social role of the church, trying to educate the illiterate Korean people.³⁸ This may be understood as the root or beginning of the present conflict among the Korean church community.

Division of the Korean church.³⁹ During the Japanese occupation of the Korean peninsular (1910-1945), the Korean church had three persecutions by the Japanese government. The first one was the conspiracy of arresting 105 Christians in 1910-1911. In 1910, Japan completely occupied the Korean peninsular. At first Japan wanted to unite the Korean church with the Japanese church, which meant that the Korean church would be ruled over by the Japanese government, like the Japanese church. But the Korean church did not want to be ruled by the Japanese government.⁴⁰ The Japanese's next action was this conspiracy. The Japanese government announced that they found an assassination plot against the contemporary

³⁸ Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 2:41.

³⁹ It should be called the division of the Korean Presbyterian church, which is the biggest denomination in Korea. According to data analyzed by Yong-je Han (pg. 220), in 1981 the Presbyterian church had 4,302,950 members which was 56.86% of all the protestant Christians, while Methodists had 11.70% (885,650 members). The number of Methodists was 20.58% of that of Presbyterians. Three years later, the Presbyterians were 5,758,563 and the Methodists were 909,183 that was only 15.78% of the Presbyterians (Han, 199). Therefore, when statements are made about the Korean Presbyterian church, the references could be about the Korean protestante churches as a whole. This section deals with the history of division of the Korean Presbyterian church, as the representative event of all of the Korean churches.

⁴⁰ Min, 235.

governor-general of the Korean peninsular which never did exist at all, and arrested 157 Koreans. Four of them were killed during the examination, and 123 were indicted for the plot, and the rest were set free. All 123 people were judged as guilty and sentenced to imprisonment from 5 years to 10 years.⁴¹ Among the 123 people, 105 were church leaders. That is why this was regarded as a plot against the Korean church. This was the first persecution by the Japanese government, while resulted in some decrease in membership.

The second persecution was started by the Independence Declaration Movement in 1919. But, on the contrary, this persecution brought helpful results for the church. The last persecution was the most severe one. In the 1930s, the Japanese government began to compel the Koreans to worship the Japanese traditional god.⁴² Many Christian leaders did not participate in the idol worship, and were imprisoned, and martyred.⁴³ However, unfortunately, not all the Christian leaders kept their fidelity to the Christian faith. These different attitudes of church leaders caused the conflict among the Korean church after Korea was liberated from Japanese rule.

In 1945, Korea was liberated by the U.S. The imprisoned church leaders who had refused to worship the idol were set

⁴¹ Ibid., 236-38.

⁴² Ibid., 343-44.

⁴³ Ibid., 349-50.

free, and a conflict developed between this group and the other leaders who followed the order of the Japanese government. At last in 1952, the Assembly of Korean Presbyterian Churches was divided into two groups. This was the first division of the Korean church.⁴⁴

The second division began with theological discussions about understandings of the Bible. This conflict was caused by higher criticism.⁴⁵ One of the professors of the Cho-sun Theological Seminary, Jai-joon Kim, was blamed for teaching higher criticism and denying faith in the infallibility of the Bible, which was the traditional understanding of the Korean church on the Bible. A severe discussion broke out in 1947, which ended in 1953, resulting in the second division of the Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church.⁴⁶

The third division was caused by the ecumenical theology of the WCC. In 1957, some evangelical pastors proposed to secede from the WCC, and this discussion lasted for two years resulting in the third division of the Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church.⁴⁷ The evangelical churches withdrew from the WCC in 1959, and other churches remained as members of the WCC. However, the theological difference was not the only reason for this third division. The more important reason was

⁴⁴ Ibid., 368-69, 374.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 329-31.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 370-72, 375-76.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 388-90.

a very political one. Anyway, we can find the root of the present theological conflict between the liberals and the evangelicals in the Korean church in this third division as well as in the second one.

Church growth in the 1960s. The 1950s was the worst decade in Korean church history as well as in Korean history. As for the church, three divisions developed, though only in the Presbyterian church. As for the nation, the Korean War occurred (1950-1953). Without the war, the Korean church would have faced a great decrease in numbers, because of severe conflicts and divisions. As pointed out, social disorder brings growth in membership of the church. The number of protestant Christians in 1945 was 382,800, and in 1955 it was 1,324,258, showing an increase of 345.9 percent.⁴⁸ This seems to be due to the Korean War. The Korean Christians usually say that the Korean War was the punishment of God for the first and second divisions of the Korean church. This is right in a sense, but from the retrospective point of view, the Korean War was a disciplinary punishment or a whip out of God's great love for the Korean church. In the whole Korean church history, the number of members kept increasing except during some periods. One period was between 1955 to 1962. The number in 1955 was

⁴⁸ Yong-je Han, One Hundred Years of Korean Church Growth (Seoul: Christian Literature Press, 1986), 22.

1,324,258, but in 1962 it was 736,844.⁴⁹ This is very similar to the phenomenon of the period from 1910 to 1919. During that period, the church did not seem to share the sufferings of the Korean people,⁵⁰ because they were led by Western missionaries, whose countries were allies of the enemy of Korea. As previously pointed out, with the Independence Declaration Movement (March 1, 1919), this misunderstanding was removed, and the church began to grow again.

The period from 1955 to 1962 was the period of the first dictator, Seung-man Lee. He was elected in 1948 as the first president of South Korea. Because his party wanted to grasp power forever, they did some illegal things during the election of the president and vice-president in March, 1919. At last in April, 1961, all the high school students, college students and the professors made a strong protest against this illegal election with a violent demonstration. The first president, Lee, had to resign his presidential post. What was worse, for the church, was that the president was a good Christian at church. Because president Lee, who all the people did not like, was a Christian, the Korean people hesitated to join the Christian church anymore.⁵¹ After his

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ This suffering was the occupation of Japan from 1910. The missionaries were American or English, and their countries approved of the Japanese occupation of Korea and even helped Japan to invade Korea.

⁵¹ Min, 390.

resignation, the church began to regrow. The number of members in 1962 was 736,844, but by 1969 there were 3,192,621.⁵²

While from the socio-political point of view, this amazing increase was the result of the resignation of the dictator, from the religious point of view, it was the result of two nation-wide revival rallies. In 1965, there was a Nation-wide Evangelization Rally which was prepared by the famous female educator, Hwal-lan Kim, and in 1969, there was another great revival rally which aimed for evangelization of all the Korean people.⁵³ These revival rallies were very important factors for such an amazing church growth, and enabled the Korean church to send Korean missionaries to foreign countries.⁵⁴

This was not the first time the Korean church showed its passion for foreign missions. After the second church growth in 1907, the Korean church began to send Korean missionaries to other Asian countries.⁵⁵ While in the 1900s they sent missionaries only to the Asian countries, in the 1960s they included some Latin American countries.

⁵² See Han.

⁵³ Kwang-soo Kim, One Hundred Years of the Korean National Church (Seoul: Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1978), 135.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 252.

⁵⁵ Kwang-soo Kim, The History of Korean Church Growth (Seoul: Institute of Korean Church History Studies, 1976), 181-83. See also Yang-sun Kim, 109-43.

The most important development in the 1960s was the beginning of urban ministry as a missionary work in Seoul in 1967.⁵⁶ This year is as important as those of 1884, 1907 or 1919, because the beginning of urban ministry means that, since then, the Korean church began to see mission as not only foreign evangelism but also as the social service or responsibility of the church.

Church growth in the 1970s. The 1970s was a very important period in Korean history from various perspectives. Politically, the second dictator, General Park, amended the constitution for indirect election of the president in 1971. Since then, the Korean people have begun their struggle for democratic values such as political freedom and economic equality. This can be understood as a kind of social disorder. Economically, the Korean manufacturing industry began to grow under the protection of a protective trade policy, and began to export industrial products. The increase of economic wealth did not always mean the real happiness of human beings.⁵⁷ The Korean people began to feel spiritual hunger.

As pointed out, the social disorder always brought the church growth. The political disorder, caused by General Park, and the spiritual hunger, caused by the rapid economic development, worked as prerequisites for the church growth in

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ See Matt. 4:4; and Luke 4:4.

the 1970s. The 1970s was the culmination of amazing Korean church growth.

There were four big revival rallies. The first one was held in 1973, whose main speaker was the famous Billy Graham. The official title of that rally was the "Billy Graham Crusade in Korea". The total number of the converts during this rally was 54,058.⁵⁸ The next rally was held the next year. It was "Expo '74," which was made up of several rallies in various cities. The total converts during these rallies were around 270,000.⁵⁹ The third was held in 1977 and had 24,703 converts. It was in 1980 that the greatest rally of the whole church history was held in Seoul. The official title of this meeting was the "'80 Rally for World Evangelization". The aggregative number of all the attendants were more than seven hundred thousand, and there were around one hundred thousand volunteers for foreign missionaries.⁶⁰ The number of protestant Christians in 1969 was 3,192,621, and in 1979 was 5,986,609.⁶¹

Mission-centered Ministry of the Korean Church

Analysis of Korean Church Growth

Sociological Analysis. The Korean protestant church has

⁵⁸ "The Korean Church in the 1970s," The Christian Newspaper, 15 Dec. 1979, 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ The Gui-dok-gong-bo, 23 Aug. 1980, 1.

⁶¹ See Han.

been growing (since it was founded as a result of reading the Bible) at the average annual rate of 14 percent.⁶² The number of protestant Christians in 1900 was 30,398, which totaled 0.6 percent of the whole population, and it became 7,637,010, which totaled 25 percent of the population, in 1984.⁶³ According to the data of Y. Han,⁶⁴ there were at least five rapid church growths. The first church growth happened between 1900 and 1908.⁶⁵ The second growth occurred between 1915 and 1920. The third came between 1930 and 1935. The fourth sprang between 1945 and 1955, and the last happened after 1962 and continued until 1988.

Such rapid growth was the work of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁶ Because God has His will toward the Korean church, God gave the Korean church such a wonderful chance to be introduced to the Word of God, the Bible, and allowed it to grow. However, far being a religious phenomenon of the Korean society, it should be explained from the social-scientific point of view.

1. The Reasons for the Church Growth before the 1960s.

⁶² Dong-jin Cho, "Analysis of Korean Church Growth," Monthly Ministry, March 1980, 21.

⁶³ See Han.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ In the previous section, I divided this growth into two periods.

⁶⁶ Won-gyu Lee, "Sociological Analysis of Korean Church Growth," Monthly Ministry, February 1983, 44.

Won-gyu Lee pointed to three factors for the Korean church growth before the 1960s:⁶⁷ preference of Korean people for the western culture, social disorders which made the Korean people anxious about their obscure future, and the powerful leadership of the church. The Korean people were very friendly to Christianity, because they accepted the Western culture with an amicable mind and thought of Christianity as the mental background of Western culture. This is supported by the fact that the first Korean protestant converts belonged to the group of traders in the north-western part of Korea, who had a very amiable attitude toward Western culture.

The Korean social situation was not so stable since the late nineteenth century. There were many sufferings, crisis, and conflicts. These social disorders usually caused people to seek a feeling of safety out of new religions, rather than the traditional ones, because the old and traditional religions seemed unable to handle these disorders. The first, second and fourth rapid growths can be explained by this sociological understanding. The first growth (1900-1908) followed the war between Japan and China which was waged on the Korean peninsular (1894-1895). During this first period another war developed between Japan and Russia in Korea (1904-1905). The second one (1915-1920) followed the great tragedy of all the Korean people. In 1910, Korea was annexed to

⁶⁷ Ibid., 45-46; Also see, Chan-Hie Kim, "The Korean Protestant Church," Center for Asian-American Ministries Review 1 (Fall 1988): 14-20.

Japan, and there was a great turmoil in Korean society. In 1919, the Independence Declaration Movement occurred.

The fourth growth (1945-1955) was just after the liberation. All Koreans were beside themselves with joy over the liberation, but the delight did not last. The liberation came with the division of the Korean peninsular into two countries: South Korea which has been controlled by the U.S., and North Korea. North Korea had been helped by communist countries such as China and the U.S.S.R., which continued just until the collapse of the communist block in 1989.⁶⁸ This was another trial to the Korean people, to the extent that in 1950 the Korean War (1950-1953) between the south and north Koreans occurred.

The last factor of leadership within the Korean church is very important to the Korean culture. In the early years of the Korean church history, many political elites were Christians, and they helped people accept the Christian faith with ease. From this point of view, the first and the fourth growth can be explained. During the two wars (1894-1895/1904-1905), the missionaries had great opportunities to show their

⁶⁸ The division of Korea was plotted by the American government. Because America did not want Russia to take any territory of Japan after World War II, they decided to divide the Korean peninsular which had been annexed to Japan since 1910. They proposed that the U.S.S.R. take the northern part of Korea instead of Japan. The Western countries did not want Russia to enter the Pacific Ocean. That is why England and the U.S. approved the Japanese annexation of Korea. Andrew S. Park, "Min-jung Theology in Korean History" lecture delivered at the School of Theology at Claremont, Fall 1988.

political powers as English or American citizens. Their political powers were identified with the power or leadership of the Christian church by the Korean people, which resulted in the first church growth. The fourth growth was just after the liberation which was given to Korean people by the American troops. The U.S. must have seemed to be an angel from God sent for their liberation by Koreans who regarded Christianity as their religion. This factor can be supported by the reverse fact that the wrong doings of Christian elites can cause the church to lose its members as in the case of the decrease during the period of 1955 and 1962. As mentioned above, during this period, Korea was ruled by a Christian dictator who was supported by the church.

2. The Reasons for the Church Growth after the 1960s. Won-gyu Lee, in his article analysing the church growth, says that the reasons for the Korean church growth after the 1960s are industrialization, political disorders, and rapid urbanization. In the 1960s, the nation-wide goal of Korea was to be rich. It could be attained only by industrialization. Therefore, Korean people began to sacrifice everything with delight toward industrialization or being rich. There followed, as a side effect of such industrialization, a serious ethical chaos and cultural vacuum. Korean people must have paid too much for physical wealth; for, they mentally lost their sense of direction. Christianity appealed to some Koreans by showing a clear direction of life, and so these

were many new converts.⁶⁹

While industrialization in the 1960s brought cultural emptiness, ethical confusion, and the loss of a sense of direction, that of the 1970s produced the feeling of relative deprivation among the poor. These poor were people such as factory workers and farmers, who did not get any economic benefits from industrialization. The deprivational compensation as a function of religion was greatly required, and with this request the church could grow very rapidly. But the rate of growth in the 1970s was lower than that of the 1960s.⁷⁰

The second factor for church growth in 1970s was the disappointment of the domestic political situation. The ultimate goal of Korean people in the 1960s and the early 1970s was to be rich, and they were ready to pay any price. But later in the middle 1970s they began to recognize that the price of giving up political freedom and economic equality, which they had paid with industrialization, was too expensive. But when they found this out, it was too late; for, there was nothing they could do to change it. They were disappointed by the mechanism of a political system which was supposed to guarantee the psychological stability and economic welfare of all the people equally, as understood to be the strongest of various social systems. Korean people tried to find the

⁶⁹ Won-gyu Lee, 46.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 47.

functional equivalent. They found it in the Christian church which, as a religion, has social-psychological stability within its function.⁷¹

Joong-gui Kim adds to this domestic political situation the international situation. According to him, one of the most serious factors for the Korean church growth in the 1960s and the 1970s was the common anxiety of war or attack upon South Korea by North Korea.⁷² Because, since the Korean War, the Korean people have been militarily threatened by North Korea, the anxiety of war is very common among the Korean people, especially the generation who had experienced the Korean War. Moreover, in the late 1960s, there were two attacks on South Korea by the North Korean special troops, which had strengthened the anger of the Korean people. The fall of Saigon, the capital city of Vietnam, to the communist army in 1974, gave another shock to the Korean people.

The last factor was rapid urbanization which resulted from industrialization. Refer to the chart on the next page, which shows the growth rate of the urban popularity to the whole popularity.⁷³ With urbanization, the Korean people began to lose self identity and the feeling of belonging. Religion is regarded as a good medicine for this kind of

⁷¹ Ibid., 48.

⁷² Joong-gui Kim, "Korean Church Growth and Its Reasons," Sin-hak-non-dan 16 (Nov. 1983): 262.

⁷³ Won-gyu Lee, 49.

.....				
1925	1945	1966	1975	1982
.....				
3.2%	12.9%	30.5%	48.4%	62%
.....				

disease: losing identity and suffering from loneliness. People can feel belongingness when they worship together, and can recover their lost identity when they learn the truth of their religion.⁷⁴

These sociological explanations seem to be correct for the Korean church growth. However, it must be observed that this kind of explanation cannot fully answer the question about the Korean protestant church growth. If the theories of religious sociology are right, why did not the other religions record similar increases in membership during the same period?⁷⁵ Therefore, various social conditions surely helped the church growth, but they were not the main factors of it.

Theological analysis. Though the socio-political explanations were very important for understanding Korean church growth, the rapid growth of the Korean church must be interpreted from the theological point of view. The most important theological factor, for the Korean church growth, is the fact that almost all the missionaries were very conservative evangelicals who believed in the infallibility of

⁷⁴ Ibid., 50.

⁷⁵ Joong-gui Kim, 266.

the Bible, and believed that only through Jesus, people could be saved.⁷⁶ Professor Palmer points to the success of the Korean mission as due to the evangelical theology of the early missionaries; on the contrary, the China mission failed because the missionaries did not have enough evangelical theology.⁷⁷ This evangelical trend resulted in the strong tradition of Bible study. This can be supported by the fact that in Korea the evangelical churches have achieved far greater growth than the less evangelical churches with liberal theology.⁷⁸

In addition to this theological tradition, the advice of John L. Nevius was very effective. In June 1890, several missionaries had a conference. J. Nevius was the main speaker for this conference. He proposed some strategies for a successful Korean mission. He gave nine proposals originally, and Underwood summarized them into four proposals. They are as follows:⁷⁹

1. Let all the Christians be His witness in their daily life.
2. Let the Korean people manage and organize their own church.

⁷⁶ Jong-yun Lee, The Theory of Church Growth (Seoul: Jung-eum Publishing, 1983), 280.

⁷⁷ See *ibid.*, 279.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 263.

⁷⁹ Paik, 198-99. See also Min, 170.

3. Let the Korean church be a self-supporting church as much as possible.
4. Let the Korean church build the church buildings in their own traditional way.

The first one is called the principle of self-propagation, which put an emphasis upon individual evangelism. For this goal, Nevius emphasized the importance of organization of the Bible study group. This has been the very strong tradition of the Korean church. This was not critical reading of the Bible; rather, it required a strong respect for the Bible as canon, and expectation for experiencing the living God during the study. This Bible study was joined with class meetings of the Methodist church. One of the most important factors for the growth in the 1970s is this joint Bible study and class meeting.⁸⁰

The second is called the principle of self-government. From this second principle, the missionaries did their best to train the Korean Christians as leaders.⁸¹ The third principle, self-supporting, is the most important one in the Nevius strategies. Without this, the Korean church could not have grown so rapidly. The last one is the principle of self-expression. This is the beginning of the indigenization

⁸⁰ Bang-nam Hwang, Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Korean Church Growth (Seoul: Pyung-dan Literature, 1990), 133.

⁸¹ Paik, 226.

theology in Korea.⁸²

As mentioned above, there are at least five rapid growth periods of the Korean church: 1900-1908 / 1915-1920 / 1930-1935 / 1945-1955 / 1962-present. Except for the second period, which is related with the Japanese annexation of Korea, all of the rest are very closely related with the revival movement. The first revival movement was started in 1903, at Won-san, and came to its culmination in 1907, in Pyung-yang, which was contemporary with the first period. The third period is contemporary with the revival movement led by a Methodist, Rev. Yong-do Lee. His theological theme was the Pauline mysticism of "in Christ." He was a greater preacher, but died in October 1932, when he was only thirty-three years old. He is regarded as the connector of the early Korean church led by the Western missionaries and the modern Korean church after the liberation; for, from Rev. Y. Lee, the Korean church could be theologically independent from the influences of the missionaries.⁸³

The fourth period is when the Yong-moon Mountain Revival Movement began, led by a Methodist lay-elder, Woon-mong Na. Later, his revival movement continued in the form of the Mountain Prayer Movement, which is still one of the unique characteristics of the Korean church. The last period, which

⁸² Sung-bum Yun, Christianity and Korean Traditional Thoughts (Seoul: Christian Literature Society of Korea, 1964), 83.

⁸³ Min, 309-13.

includes today, is contemporary with the Korean pentecostal movement led by Rev. Paul Y. Cho. He is the pastor-in-charge of the biggest church in the world (as a local church), the Full Gospel Central Church, which is located in Seoul, Korea. The modern church growth of the Korean church was started by him; for, he introduced the concept of church growth and theological and biblical foundations of the desire for church growth. All these revival movements were pentecostal. Therefore, the pentecostal revival movement is one of the main theological factors of Korean church growth.

Present Situation

The Korean church has been growing at the average annual rate of 14 percent since it was founded.⁸⁴ In 1900, the protestant Christians totaled 0.34 percent of the whole Korean population, and twenty years later they totaled 1.06 percent. In 1940, they were 1.42 percent, and in 1960 they were 6.5 percent. The total in 1982 was 25 percent.⁸⁵ Refer to the chart which shows how the number of protestant Christians has been changing:⁸⁶

.....				
YEAR	1900	1908	1911	1915
NUMBER	30,398	161,168	166,116	185,053
.....				

⁸⁴ Dong-jin Cho, 21.

⁸⁵ Won-gyu Lee, 44-45.

⁸⁶ See Han.

YEAR	1920	1925	1930	1935
NUMBER	210,614	257,723	260,578	361,464
.....				
YEAR	1940	1945	1955	1962
NUMBER	394,298	382,800	1,324,258	736,844
.....				
YEAR	1969	1972	1979	1984
NUMBER	3,192,621	3,463,108	5,986,609	7,637,010
.....				

The Korean church had continued this wonderful march of growth in number, until 1985. In 1988, the GNP of Koreans reached the amount of \$3,470.00, which passes the amount of \$3,400 that church growth scholars regard as the turning point in church growth.⁸⁷ The year 1985 recorded a 0 percent increase, which means decrease, in comparison with the natural increase of the population. According to J. Eun, one of the largest denominations in Korea has been recording a decrease of Sunday school students since 1988.⁸⁸

Why does this serious situation happen to the Korean church? As church growth scholars say, is economic wealth the only factor for this phenomenon? Or are there any other reasons for it? I think there are two important factors for

⁸⁷ Chang-bok Chung, A Handbook for Preaching and Worship (Seoul: Hong Sung Sa, 1989), 3.

⁸⁸ Joon-kwan Eun, "The Future of the Korean Church," lecture delivered at seminar organized by Alumni Association of Yonsei Theological Seminary, Los Angeles, Dec. 1990.

this tragic situation. One is the problem of leadership, and the other is the moral and ethical incapacity of the church.

The Problem of ecclesiology. The Korean church seems to be suffering from lack of leadership. Who are the leaders of the church? Can all members be leaders, or only some selected elite group? It is a very delicate matter to ask this question, because, in the modern democratic society where equality and freedom are most important values, people have the tendency to doubt or question the authority of any traditional system or value. Modern sophisticated protestant Christians seem to have the same tendency with their contemporaries. They began to question the authority of church and priests from practical points of view. The absolute obedience to the authority of the church or his or her pastor is no more the essential qualification of a good Christian. The tradition of excommunication is just one of the relics of old Christianity, because no one respects church authority to decide excommunicational relevance. If the lay members of the present protestant Church do not like their pastor, they have the right to FIRE the priest, who they say is the servant of God, not of theirs, without the permission of God.

How can this thing happen in the body of Christ? In my opinion, it is because of lack of leadership from the priests. This is not an issue of leadership which is dealt with in a class on church administration or management, but leadership

from the theological point of view. The priests do not seem to have any clear identity of their being a protestant priest. They say that they have been elected by God Himself, and ordained by the living God. However, unfortunately, there seem to be only a few who believe it. This can be supported by the fact that there are too many applicants for seminary who decide to be a priest out of some human decision, not out of the calling experiences.⁸⁹

The pastors are respected not because they are ordained priests, but because they are well trained and educated professionals. The protestant church has begun to require wonderful managers with great qualifications, instead of priests only with a passion for God. The Christian church has been changed to be a common organization of people; it has been reduced to a club, and its spiritual power or leadership has been replaced by the good skill of management or human relationship that can be attained through a good education,⁹⁰ because they begin to forget what the Christian church truly represents.

The problem of leadership is the problem of identity and pride, and the problem of identity and pride is the problem of

⁸⁹ Gyun-jin Kim, "Theological Anthropology," lecture delivered at the United Graduate School of Theology, Seoul, Spring 1982.

⁹⁰ That is why the pastors are required to have a strong background by the church. See Reil Sharler, "The Lessons from over the Pacific Ocean" United Methodist News 7, no. 29 (January 1991): 2.

ecclesiology. Once the priests become the servants of God who are elected to serve His people, they should try to please God, not His people,⁹¹ All this seems to be derived from the lack of proper understanding of church, or from the lack of ecclesiology. The Korean church should have a clear and sound ecclesiology, from the biblical point of view. Korean churches have to recover spiritual authority and power, on the basis of biblical ecclesiology, and the leaders should recover their identity and pride on the same basis.

The moral and ethical incapacity of the Korean church.

The theological issue for the Early Church was Christology, and with the flow of time, then their concern was shifted to Ecclesiology. Both Christology and Ecclesiology are very crucial contents for the founding and building up of the body of Christ. However, today they are no longer the main themes of theological discussions of the Korean church. The first theological discussion of the Korean church began in the 1930s about the Bible. However, it was not a discussion, but a dispute. Each group only tried to cry out that the other was wrong, instead of explaining their own understanding of the Bible. The second discussion was about the theology of the WCC in the late 1950s. The same situation happened. Since then, the Korean church has been divided into two groups,⁹²

⁹¹ Acts 4:19.

⁹² Usually, they are called the conservative group and the liberal group. In Korea, the conservative and the evangelical are same, because the Korean church tradition has been

and they have been continually attacking or blaming each other.

The war between these groups resulted in the lack of moral or ethical ability within the Korean church. The Korean protestant Christians have lost their identity, as pilgrims, as a result of this dispute. The leaders of church have been too busy analyzing and criticizing the leaders of the other group to reflect on themselves, and their congregations, from the moral and ethical points of view. The evangelical group has been too busy blaming the liberals for being a heretic group because of their being different from themselves, rather than teaching their congregations to obey the ethical teachings of the Bible. Even the liberal group, who insist

evangelical. Liberal was used first by the conservatives because, for them, the other group seemed to be liberated from the tradition of the Korean church. I will accept this name, liberals, only because more than half of the Korean Christians use it as it is meant.

From my understanding, the Western church is divided into four groups (conservative/evangelical/liberal/pentecostal). The conservatives are more God-centered, and the pentecostals are more Holy Spirit-centered. The evangelicals and the liberals are both Jesus Christ-centered, with the difference being whether they put the emphasis upon the divinity of Jesus or the humanity of Jesus. The evangelicals follow the tradition of a higher Christology, and focus their concern upon the salvation power of Jesus as a divine being, while the liberals are within the tradition of lower Christology, and try to follow the examples of Jesus as loving others, feeding the hungry, helping the poor, liberating the oppressed, and so on. The diversity within the Western church is trinitarian.

The Korean church is a little different. It is divided into only two groups: the evangelical group and the liberal group. This division, as pointed out above, was due to different understandings of the authority of the Bible. This would best be understood as a division by confession or faith, rather than theological differences.

that the major mission of Christians is social participation or social responsibility, has been too busy blaming the evangelical group--insisting that the mission of the church is only the earning of souls--to keep the Korean society from being corrupted morally and ethically. The modern Korean Christians seem to be reduced to a saltine without salt or a light without any heat or brightness.⁹³ This seems to derive from the lack of proper ecclesiology, too. The evangelicals do not pay any attention to what the Christian church should be from the biblical point of view. At the same time, the liberals do not have any interest in the present system of the church and even do not seem to care what may happen to the church at all, because they are too socialized or secularized.⁹⁴ Both of them must recover ecclesiology from the biblical point of view.

The problem of the Korean church. What is the problem of

⁹³ There is a joke with a significant meaning. "S/he is a good fellow, though s/he is a Christian". Or "We can believe in him/her, though s/he is a good Christian." This is no longer a joke in the Korean society. To this writer, it sounds like a death penalty for the Korean church.

⁹⁴ The liberals do not seem to be interested in the salvation of the souls of the non-Christians. Though they are right in insisting upon the necessity of Christians' taking part in social affairs, they make a great mistake in neglecting the grace of salvation which was given and shown in the Christ event. The traditional church surely must have made a mistake in missing one of the major tasks, social responsibility or humanization. It is not right that anything should be replaced by only one of the many parts of which it is made up. Christians should be careful in protecting the secular society to which they belong, and at the same time they should proclaim the gospel of salvation only through Jesus Christ.

the Korean church? The liberals try to answer this question by blaming rapid church growth, led by the evangelical group, in the 1960s and the 1970s, for causing the whole problem of the Korean church. But it does not seem to be fair, because the more important reason does not lie in church growth itself, but remains in the lack of following-up measures or education after such a rapid growth. If the evangelicals and the liberals had cooperated together, in one Lord Jesus Christ in earning souls and educating or nurturing them as faithful Christians, the present problems that the Korean church faces would not have existed at all.

What is the problem of the Korean church? H. Chun indicates five points: materialism or secularism, rivalry between local churches, a shamanistic trend, an emotional trend, and the lack of ecclesiology⁹⁵. W. Lee indicates three points: materialism, no relationship with the secular society which they stand in the mist of, and the inability of the church which resulted from the "organization-ization" of the living body of Christ⁹⁶. J. Kim adds one more, the individualized trend⁹⁷. In my opinion, these problems can be summarized into two: lack of leadership from the ecclesiological point of view, and the moral and ethical

⁹⁵ Ho-jin Chun, "The Reasons for the Growth of the Korean Church and Its Problems," Monthly Ministry, Nov. 1981, 64.

⁹⁶ Won-gyu Lee, 50.

⁹⁷ Joong-gui Kim, 263.

incapacity of the protestant church derived from different theological understandings of Christian faith and the unnecessary discussions on those differences. To solve this serious situation, the Korean church should recover its identity as being the Body of Christ, from the biblical point of view, not from any theological point of view. What is essential for the future of the Korean church is not any theology, evangelical or liberal perspective, but the recovery of biblical faith in God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

Ministry of the Korean Church for the Twenty-first Century

A synthetic understanding of mission. There are two different understandings of mission of the Christian church. The ecumenical group regards mission as liberation or humanization, and the evangelical group thinks of mission as evangelism or earning souls. Both of them are making a mistake in taking only one part of the whole mission, which the Bible teaches us in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20). According to my understanding, humanization or liberation is not the only mission, and evangelism or church growth is not the only mission, either. Both of them are mission. It does not matter whether the Great Commission is the ipsissima verba (what Jesus said with his own lips), or the addition of the evangelists, because we confess as our canon not only what Jesus said with his own lips, but also what others wrote.

The Bible defines the mission of the church as disciplization. It is made up of three elements: going to

people, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching what Jesus commanded. The first, going to people, is related to theological issues such as incarnation and indigenization; the second, baptizing, is related to the issues such as evangelism and church growth; and the last, teaching, is related to humanization and liberation. All of these are mission.

The social responsibility of Christians is not the result of proper mission or evangelism, as some evangelicals say. By using the word result, they imply that social responsibility is a natural concomitant attained without any efforts. But it is not such a thing. In order to show effective social responsibility, we must train ourselves and try to kill our instincts. The evangelicals, who neglect what the ecumenical group says, seems to be the examples of what Jesus said in Matt. 7:21-23. If social responsibility were the result of evangelism, calling Jesus, "Lord, Lord" would guarantee entering the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:21). We would have to rewrite or take away from the evangelical Bible the passages in Matt. 7:21-23 and 25:31-46, and James 2:14-26. The evangelicals seem to make the same kind of mistake that the audience of the Letter from James did.

Church growth through proclaiming Jesus as savior, and baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, is not an old relic that has no meaning for modern scientific people. Even the theory of demythologization cannot destroy

the traditional faith of Christians in salvation, through the precious blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for the salvation of all human beings; for, it deals with only the doubts of the modern so-called scientific⁹⁸ Christians about the miraculous stories in the Bible, not the essence of the bible or the salvation story of God through Jesus Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ should be the criterion of being a true Christian. The nickname, Christian, was first used for designating the believers in Antioch,⁹⁹ not because they were good people with strong social responsibility or a great

⁹⁸ The present phenomenon of doubting the historicity or scientificity of the Bible was started by the evolution theory. But this is not a scientific theory at all, because any scientific theory should be proved by an experiment or be supported by mathematical probability. This theory has no proof or support of probability. The evolution theory is a philosophy rather than a scientific theory. Moreover, there is no one who believes that one species evolves into another more developed species, since modern genetics discovered the structure of DNA and RNA which decides the characters as well as the features of the next generation.

Modern Christians have the tendency to prefer what the scientists say, rather than what the Bible says on the basis of faith in the omnipotent God. For example, the scientists say that this planet must be more than 4,500,000,000 years old, which is the minimum period required for the evolution theory. But according to the Bible, it cannot be older than 10,000 years old. There were more than several scientific articles showing that the earth should be younger than 10,000 years old. They were neglected without any proper dispute only because they were not in accord with the evolution philosophy. Those who believe they are well educated scientifically, and have enough intelligence to deny the historicity of the Bible, are denying historicity, not on the basis of science, but on another religious belief. For, science does not seem to have enough power to deny the authority of the Bible from the scientific point of view. See Korean Association of Creation Research, Scientific Proofs Deny the Evolution Theory (Seoul: Yong Nam Literature, 1985), 23-27.

⁹⁹ Acts 4:26.

desire and passion for liberation. It was because they were given the good news about the Lord Jesus¹⁰⁰ by some believers who were scattered by the persecution when Stephan was killed,¹⁰¹ and returned to the Lord. So if anyone denies the priority of the good news of the Lord Jesus, s/he is not deserving of that name, Christian, from the traditional point of view.

Both the evangelicals and the ecumenicals are right in saying their understanding is biblical, because the Bible deals with both of the understandings. But both of them are wrong in denying different understandings from their own, and in making light of ideas of others, though not denying another's considered understanding. In addition to understanding these two groups as evangelism and humanization, one more thing must be included: going to all peoples everywhere. This is very closely related to systematic theological issues of incarnation and indigenization.

Foundation of the synthetic understanding of mission.

The theological foundation for the synthetic understanding of mission can be found in the history of discussion on faith or actions of the Christian church since the Early Church. The first argument was from Paul. He emphasized the factor of faith, because he was a man of great actions in the face of the laws. He never denied the factor of actions, but he

¹⁰⁰ Acts 11:21.

¹⁰¹ Acts 11:19.

blamed those who insisted that the laws of Moses were necessary for salvation. This made the others misunderstand him as denying the factor of actions. So in the next stage, the factor of actions should be emphasized. This job was done by the evangelists Matthew and James. They emphasized the factor of actions, but never denied the factor of faith. Later, after the Edict of Milan, the church could not help giving up the factor of actions, because of the rich converts who had no desire at all to sell their properties and give possessions to the poor. The Middle Ages converted this factor of actions to the theological theory of merits, which caused the protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century.

It was natural that the protestant churches should have emphasized the factor of faith rather than the factor of actions, because they fought against the distorted understanding of actions of the Catholic church. Modern evangelicals are under the influence of the reformers, and have inherited theological traditions from them.

As a reaction to this trend, there appeared the ecumenical understanding of mission. They regard salvation as liberation or humanization which requires actions of Christians. Here we are again in the midst of severe conflicts between faith and actions, which Paul, the evangelists, and James and the reformers faced. Refer to the chart on the next page that shows the history of the discussion of faith or actions.

.....

	JS	PL	NG	E&J	NG	RC	RF	NG	EC
.....									
FAITH	++	++	++	oo	--	++	++	oo	--
ACTIONS	++	oo	--	++	++	oo	--	++	++
.....									

(++ emphasize / oo-recognized but not mentioned /
 -- denied) (JS-Jesus / PL-Paul / NG-next generation /
 E&J-evangelists and James / RC-Roman Catholic /
 RF-Reformers / EC-ecumenical)

This conflict can be ceased with the help of Eastern dialectics. As is well known, Eastern dialectics is quite different from Western. While the latter produces a completely new one (syntheses) out of conflict of opposites (theses and antitheses), the former tries to embrace both of the opposites. Biblically speaking, this is the principal of Shalom. The biblical shalom does not mean the mere peace without any conflicts, but a well-balanced situation among conflicts and oppositeness. We must stop the discussion of "faith or actions," and cease to ask which has priority. Instead, we must ask how can we baptize more people, and how can we teach them to obey what Jesus commanded, in order to be the light for this dark world, and to be the salt against this corrupted world.

Mission: an answer to the future of the Korean church.
 Ministry is made up of four elements: gathering, celebrating,

nurturing and mission or social service.¹⁰² This is a very important understanding of ministry, though the mission of the church is considered only from the ecumenical point of view. Gathering means church growth through evangelism. Jesus' command to baptize is related to this gathering. Without gathering, any other elements would not be mentioned. This is the most basic factor for all ministry. To this end, the evangelical group have been making a great contribution.

Celebrating is the result of gathering, and at the same time the ultimate goal of gathering people. This gives a very important warning for the church growth school. The ultimate goal of all Christians is the glorification of God, and all the other purposes should aim to serve it. Church growth is no more than a good method for this goal. It cannot be the goal itself.

Nurturing is made up of two parts: caring and educating. Caring is the action of the church out of its love for Jesus¹⁰³ and for other Christians. Educating is helping one another to firmly build up their faith. Jesus' command to teach is related to educating one's faith. Caring and educating aim toward the last factor of ministry, social service. As gathering is aimed for celebrating, nurturing should be aimed for mission or social service. The liberals

¹⁰² C. Dean Freudenberger, "The World Mission of the Church," lecture delivered at the School of Theology at Claremont, Spring 1990.

¹⁰³ John 21:15-19.

have been making a great contribution to this goal.

In the twenty-first century, the Korean church should try to have all of these four functions in balance. The whole Korean church should be reminded of the order of Jesus to be one in Him, as Jesus and the Father are one.¹⁰⁴ They must learn the merits of other groups, where they lack and where they help each other, to recover again the lost parts. Mission (not only evangelism but also humanization or liberation) should be the goal and the contents of the twenty first century ministry of the Korean church. The biblical understanding of mission includes both baptizing as evangelism and teaching as humanization. Now that Korean church growth has stopped since 1988, if the whole Korean church will not repent and be one in Jesus Christ, it cannot recover its spiritual posture and will disappear from Korean history, as did Nestorian Christianity in the eighth century.

¹⁰⁴ John 17:21.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This project started with the question, "What is the mission of the Christian church?" I have studied the possible answers from the theological point of view, following the history of the WCC and the evangelical missionary conferences and councils, and surveyed the biblical understandings of mission.

There are two different understandings of mission according to these theological positions. The WCC of the liberals think of mission as the recovery of genuine humanity, and the evangelicals regard it as foreign evangelism, accompanied by the result of humanization. Dialectically speaking, the mission of the Christian church is evangelism, as well as social service or social responsibility. The latter is not the natural result of the former, and the former should not be neglected; for, the charisma of the Holy Spirit (which is related to the former), and the fruits of the Holy Spirit (which are related to the latter), are equally important, and neither of them should be neglected.

Conversion, which may be recognized as a gate to mission, should be mission itself, not an introduction to it. At the same time, humanization, which may be recognized as a result of mission, should be mission itself, not an appendage. Mission without evangelism is nothing but a social movement, and mission without humanization is no more than a Christian

superstition.

From this point of view, the subject of mission is God, the creator and the redeemer, and the object of mission is all of God's creatures. The basis and the goal is God. In other words, the redeemer God recovers His creatures to their original creation. But the whole process should be done through God's fellow human beings, so-called Christians. They are called to be the witnesses to this mission. So they have to proclaim the mission totally. They should proclaim the subject of mission in the form of evangelism, and the goal of mission in the form of human dignity and shalom with all God's creatures. The first proclamation should be done with the passion for the glory of God, not only with the lips; and the second one ought to be done with the love of God, not only with moral and ethical dedication. Mission is God's recovery of His Creatures to His creation through the born-again Christians' proclamation of the gospel and their living out the gospel. Because the conservative Korean churches began to shift their concerns from this original mission to other issues of church buildings, budget, and power games, they lost their spiritual power and leadership and were reduced to a rich religious organization. At the same time, because the liberal Korean churches began to make light of the importance of human souls, and neglect the spiritual, mysterious power of the gospel--which should take its place always before social responsibility--they lost spiritual power and leadership and

were reduced to a religious socio-political club. This is why Korean church growth has stopped since 1988. If the conservatives open their doors to the poor and shift their concerns to the real problems of social, economical, and structural sin, and if the liberals recover their spiritual power and convert their concerns to the ultimate problem of salvation of souls, the Korean church will be able to rewrite the pages of its amazing growth. I conclude with the traditional confession of Christians about Jesus Christ: "God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead" (Apostles' Creed, ecumenical version).

"Yet I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent Surely I am coming soon" (Rev. 2:4-5; 22:20).

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